

# Amusement TODAY

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Digital Edition

## IAFE planners excited about 2022 Annual Convention, Trade Show

AT: Pam Sherborne

psherborne@amusementtoday.com

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. — Planners of the 2022 International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE) Convention and Trade Show have been excited watching the numbers for the upcoming event.

In early November, registration numbers for the event, set for Sunday-Wednesday, Nov. 27-30, at the Indiana Convention Center, Indianapolis, were meeting and exceeding the goals for which the association had hoped.

"As of our final pre-registration deadline of November 4, we have met our budget goals for registration and that is exciting," said Marla Calico, IAFE president and CEO. "We've already exceeded our goal of sales



The Indiana State Fairgrounds and Event Center, Indianapolis, will be the setting for several events during the International Association of Fairs and Expositions 2022. COURTESY INDIANA STATE FAIR

on day passes, which fits exactly with our marketing strategy of reaching out to the hundreds of county fairs within easy driving distance of Indianapolis, the Crossroads of America."

Calico said the IAFE plans to continue its outreach to those county fairs, mostly run by volunteers. Changing the locations of the annual convention and creating a fully packed program on the first day, it will hopefully help those who can easily drive, to do so even if it is just that one day.

This year, the first day of the convention is packed with workshops, networking opportunities and Institute of Fair Management (IFM) courses. There is a reception in the afternoon and, afterward, the Raisin' for a Reason Wagons & WhiskeyVIP Event & Foundation Fundraiser is set to be held at the Indiana State Fairgrounds. Following that event, while attendees are still on the grounds, is

the Fair-A-Palooza Tailgate, expected to be a highlight.

"The Fair-A-Palooza at the Indiana State Fair is set to be one of the coolest things ever done at the IAFE Annual Convention with rides, games, food and drink, entertainment and even ice skating and special driving tours of the holiday light event going on at the fairgrounds," Calico said.

More educational sessions and other activities kick off Monday, Nov. 28, early. Scheduled for this day are the IAFE committee chairs meeting, zone meetings and evening receptions.

The trade show is open Monday from 1:30-5:30 p.m. Calico said there were 350 booth spaces sold this year.

Tuesday, Nov. 29, opens with yoga and Pilates offered in the early morning, followed by the Buyers'

Breakfast and workshops. The NICA Advisory Board meets on this day.

In the afternoon on Tuesday, the General Session will run 1:15-3 p.m. Jason Brown will deliver the keynote address. Brown is a resident of Henderson, North Carolina. He played football at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill while studying interpersonal communications. He went into the National Football League in 2005 and played with the Baltimore Ravens and, later, the St. Louis Rams. He retired from the NFL in 2012.

Also, during the General Session, the IAFE will present its awards. They include Hall of Fame, Heritage, Rising Star and State and Provinces awards.

The trade show opens following the General Session. It will run 3-5:30 p.m.

A full day of programming is also set for Wednesday, Nov. 30, the final day of this year's convention. It will wrap up with the Closing General Session and Celebration in the afternoon.

Comedian C. Willi Myles will entertain attendees. There will be an IFM graduation ceremony and the presentation of the past president plaque.

A celebration will follow.

Overall, the IAFE has

► See IAFE, page 7

### Keynote speaker: Jason Brown

Jason Brown is a resident of Henderson, North Carolina. He played football at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, while studying interpersonal communications. He went into the National Football League in 2005 and played on various teams until 2012.

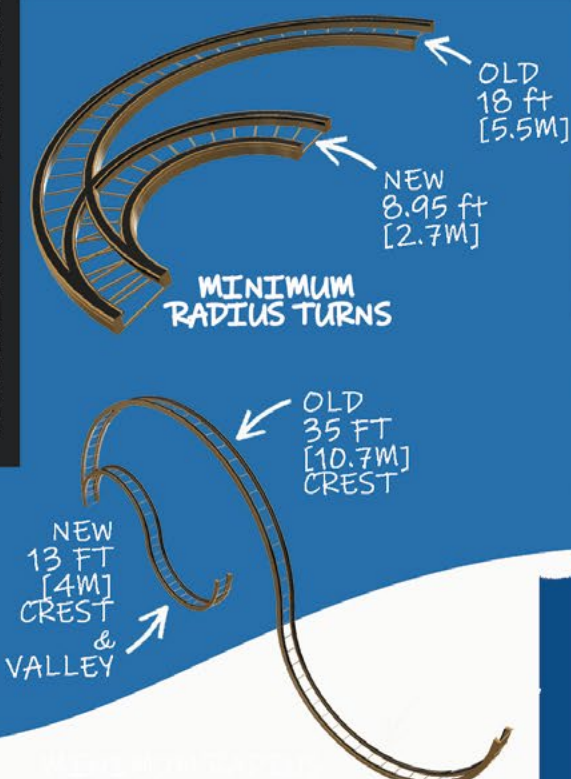
He was drafted by the Baltimore Ravens in 2005. As a free agent, he signed with the St. Louis Rams in 2009. He played with the Rams until 2012 at which time he decided to retire from the league.

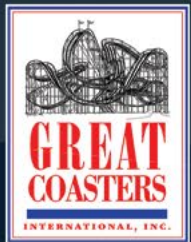
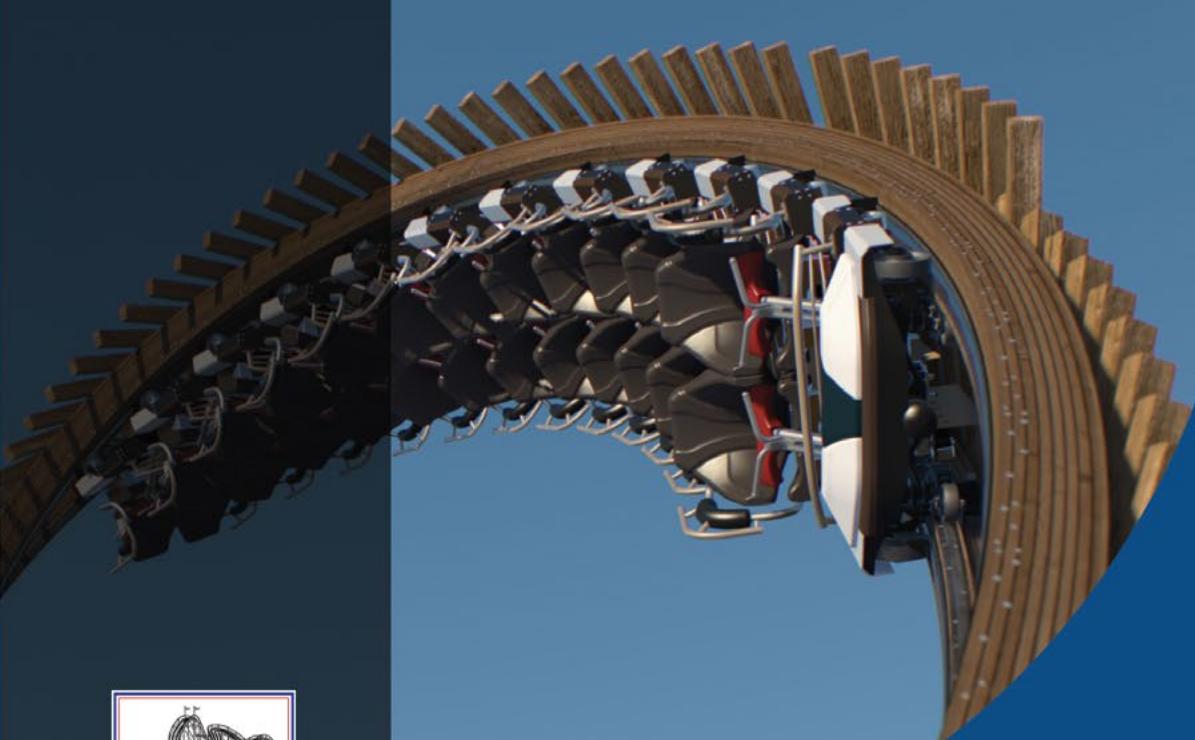


Jason Brown

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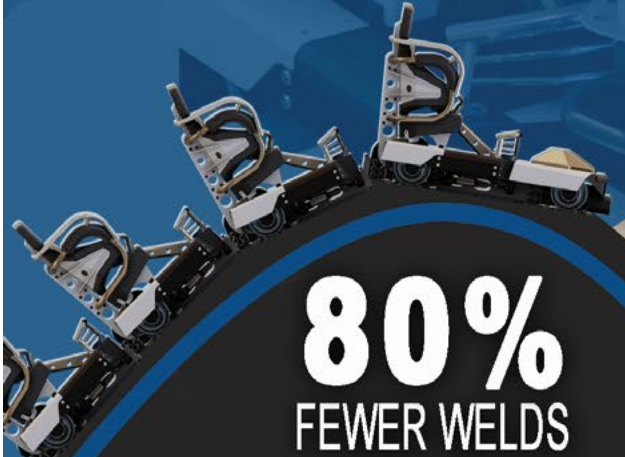


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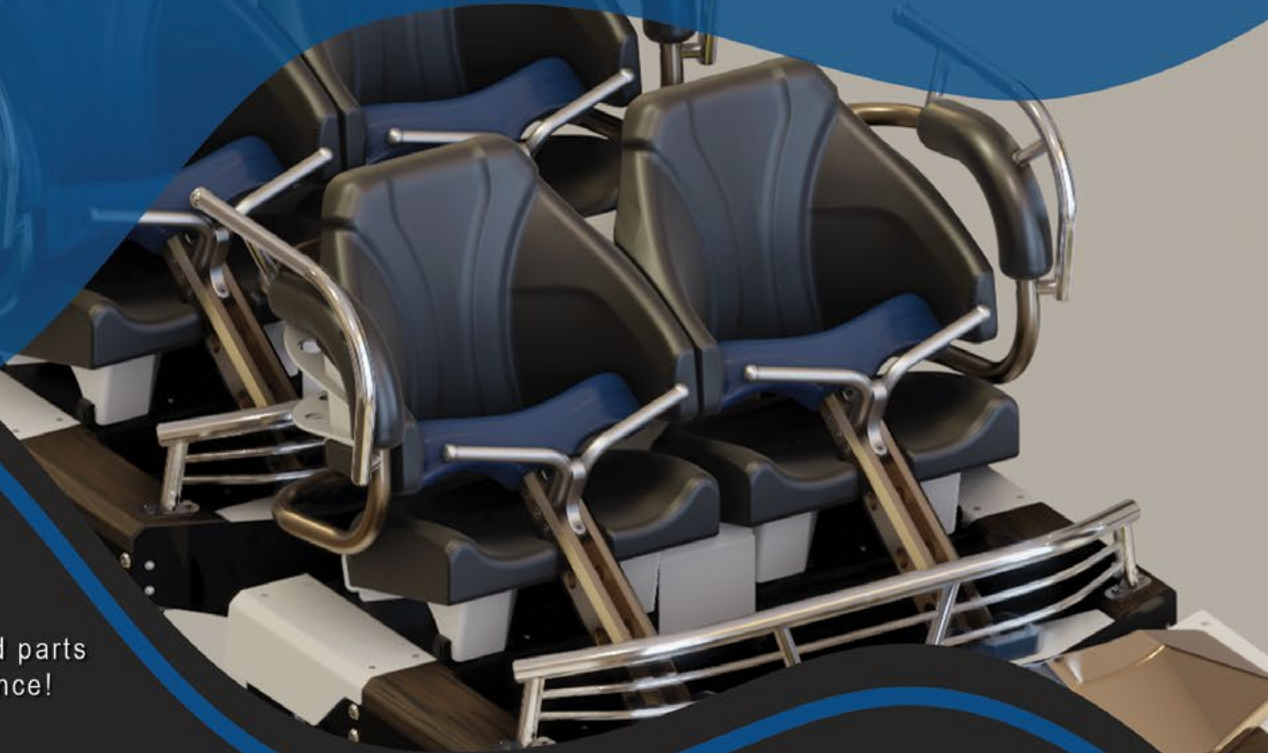
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# AMUSEMENT VIEWS

**AT NOTEBOOK:** John W.C. Robinson, jrobinson@amusementtoday.com

## What inspires you?



Robinson

Inspiration comes from everywhere and it is what drives not only our dreams but our innovations and creations that we leave for the world to see. Inspiration creates the vision that we build a piece of our future on.

Does it come from the laughter of a child as they ride their first

Tilt-A-Whirl or from the smile of someone you love as they walk beside you under the scent of cotton candy and waffle cones? Do the dreams that create tomorrow's entertainment stem from witnessing the realized dreams of others and their innovations? Or, will midway lights shine brighter and more colorful for the next generation because a wide-eyed child today grows up just to wonder "What if...?"

The amusement midway is built on innovations and dreams, inventions and inspirations. We, as an industry, build on what's come before to create something greater. We strive to recapture the magic we first felt when we stepped under the lights and sounds of a touring carnival or family amusement park, and magnify it for our own children and the world ahead.

As we slide into the holiday season, magic and dreams are in plentiful supply. While the innovations of the industry were on display at IAAPA Expo 2022 in Orlando — and again during the upcoming IAFE Trade Show — many of the dreams of tomorrow's family entertainment are born in the precious moments we'll spend with our families during the approaching holidays.

Listen to the children's laughter. Enjoy the smiles and glistening eyes of those who hold our heart. Embrace the moments with family eager to visit. Our family and loved ones are the key to the inspirations that we will carry with us as we dream up more fun, brighter moments and relaxing days ahead for families to enjoy in the years to come via our beloved industry.

**FLINT'S VIEW:** Bubba Flint



**INDUSTRY VOICE:** Sharon Barlow, Midway Magazine

## Hope and faith

I often see homeless people on the street corner with their signs. I typically roll down my car window and pass along my spare change. When my husband lost his job, I realized that homeless person could easily be me.



Barlow

I recently sat down with Ronnie and Marie Thomas, who have owned and operated a mouse game for over 50 years, mostly on the midway of Powers Great American Midways and then Powers & Thomas Midway Entertainment. Ronnie shared a conversation where Corky Powers mentioned that just a few years ago, approximately 600 carnivals traveled North America. Today, there are only about 200.

I wonder, what enables the 200 carnivals still traveling to continue without a crippling fear that they would be next? Whether it be circumstances beyond our control, a series of bad decisions or a

lethal combination of the two, we could all be one of the 400 who used to travel.

Ronnie went on to say, "You need to have hope." It occurred to me what he really meant was you need to have faith. What's the difference? Oxford Languages defines

hope as a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen while faith is defined as complete trust or confidence in someone or something. Simply, hope is that we want the sun to rise tomorrow whereas faith is that we know and trust the sun will rise tomorrow.

I do believe those 200 carnivals still traveling, booking new dates and buying new equipment, do not hope they will still be in business in two years. They have faith they will be in business in two years. For just that reason, I do not just have hope this great industry will endure, I know it will.

*Opinions expressed on this page are those of the columnist(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher.*



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### Industry Affiliated Charities

Give Kids the World Village, Morgan's Wonderland, National Roller Coaster Museum & Archives



# 2 MINUTE DRILL



AT: Janice Withrow

## Pete Owens, Dollywood

Anyone who knows **Pete Owens** knows his genuine passion for the amusement industry and his dependable, hard-working and professional spirit. Pete started his career in the television news business, which has come in handy as vice president of marketing for **The Dollywood Company** where he has served in various roles the past 23 years. He is an active volunteer in his community as well as in the industry, and as a self-professed roller coaster fan, enjoys being a board member for the **National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives**.

**Title:** Vice President of Marketing.

**Years in the industry:** 23 years.

**Best thing about the industry:**

We are in the business of joy and bringing families closer together.

**Favorite amusement ride:**

I am a roller coaster enthusiast – my favorite is The Phoenix at Knoebels.

**If I wasn't working in the amusement industry, I would be ...** Probably still working in news or teaching journalism.

**Biggest challenge facing our industry:**

I believe we will all be facing the challenge that larger guests are bringing to ride manufacturers and park operators. It is a guest excellence and experience issue as well as a safety issue.

**The thing I like most about amusement/water park season is ...**The joy on the faces of families when they get off of Lightning Rod or see something in a show like A Gazillion Bubbles that they have never experienced before.

**It's December! My favorite Christmas song is ...** There are so many but I have to narrow it down to three. "White Christmas" by Bing Crosby, "Christmas Time is Here" by the Vince Guaraldi Trio and "Let it Snow" by Dean Martin.

**On Christmas morning, you can find me ...** In the kitchen working on Christmas dinner with my wife and watching a Christmas movie marathon.

**My favorite of Santa's reindeer is ...** Comet because of *The Santa Clause 2*.

**All-time favorite holiday movie is ...** *White Christmas* (I have a dozen others!)

**I do a good impression of ...** Gary Sladel! But other than that, it is a fail for me.



An active volunteer in his local Tennessee community, Dollywood's Pete Owens is passionate for the amusement industry. COURTESY PETE OWENS

**I am hoping the New Year will be ...**

Full of peace and a return to civility between everyone regardless of their personal points of view.

**When people ask me what Dolly Parton is really like, I tell them ...** She is a lot like you see on TV, but nicer, smarter, more talented and incredibly engaged.

**Are you a morning person or a night owl?** I am not a fan of early mornings — definitely a night owl.

**When I say shopping, you say ...** Amazon.

**The coolest place I ever vacationed would have to be ...** Kuai. It is beautiful and quiet like you would expect Hawaii to be.

**The all-time greatest professional athlete hands-down is ...** Cal Ripken.

**Are you more of a wine and cheese or beer and pretzels kind of guy?** I am kind of a both guy. Both have their place but I like Malbec and I also like craft beer.

**In one word, my job is ...** Awesome.

**I know it's going to be a good day when ...** The sun is shining and the coffee is hot.

**On Sundays, I love to ...** Chill out on my porch after Mass and reset for the week.

**Website I am on most often:** 24/7 Sports.

**Living in Tennessee is amazing because ...** You have four beautiful seasons here in the Smokies. It is one of the most beautiful places in the world, and I am blessed to live here.

## THE INDUSTRY SEEN

### An amusing career



ORLANDO — After more than 40 years serving the amusement industry, *Amusement Today's* Sue Nichols (on right) has announced her retirement effective at the end of 2022. During IAAPA Expo 2022, Nichols' 41st expo, *Amusement Today* publisher Gary Slade (on left) held a career celebration at AT's booth. Nichols' clients, associates and friends toasted her impact on the amusement industry and thanked her for countless years of friendship and service. During the event, Slade presented Nichols with an award recognizing her nearly 20 years of service to *Amusement Today*. AT/TIM BALDWIN

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►IAFE  
Continued from page 1

a packed schedule, but Calico assures all attendees that there are plenty of networking opportunities. "We've left plenty of time for networking and expanded our Networking Circles to every day," she said. The Networking Circles are dedicated times for networking in separate rooms assigned by job responsibility type.

The Ed Shed is another area sure to provide networking as well. The Ed Shed is an area where IAFE committees have booths with displays. There are pop-up contests in the Ed Shed, marketing events and other activities. Starting on Monday, the IAFE will offer its Educational Experiences programming. One is

offered Monday morning, two on Tuesday and two on Wednesday. These experiences are:

- Delivering an Outstanding Guest Experience, to take place at the **Gainbridge Fieldhouse**, home of the **National Basketball League Indiana Pacers**.
- What Do You Do the Rest of the Year? A behind-the-scenes look at what fair officials do when the fair is not taking place. This will be held at the Indiana State Fairgrounds and Event Center.

- Delivering Impactful Ag Education Programs — a Hands-on Experience. This also is at the Indiana State Fairgrounds.
- Exhibits from Idea to Opening Day at **Children's Museum of Indianapolis**.
- Massive Event Production at the **Indianapolis Motor Speedway**.

Education sessions offered during the 2022 convention include a plethora of topics. Calico feels this programming is one of the best.

A sampling of session titles includes Facility Marketing and Sales – It's a Year-Round Experience; Opening Big.... Finishing Strong!; Ticketing "Rights" and Wrongs; How Ticketing Technology Can Benefit Other Departments; Impactful Marketing Tools; Growing Revenue Online; How to Sell More Tickets Online and Improving the Fair/Vendor Relationship.

Others are Uniting the Community Through Food and Culture; Expansion and Opportunity in Youth Livestock Programs;



The IAFE 2022 Convention and Trade Show, set for Nov. 27-30, has a packed schedule of education sessions and workshops (above). The IAFE is holding its annual convention at the Indiana Convention Center (below), located downtown in Indianapolis. COURTESY IAFE, INDIANA CONVENTION CENTER

Hosting a Cannabis Festival; How Do You Build Your VIP Entertainment Experience; Developing and Nurturing Relationships with Community Leaders and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion – Why It Matters to You, Your Organization, and Your Community.

Others are The 101 of Contracts and Other Legal Questions; Countdown to Transition – Succession Planning for Fairs; Culture in the Workplace; How to Communicate Safety Enhancements to the Public; Key Factors for Crowd Management; Finding the Next Generation of Superintendents/ Volunteers for Your Exhibits Departments; Volunteers: How to Recruit and Perks Given; Establishing a 501(c)3 Charitable Foundation at Your Fair and the Status of the Mobile Amusement Industry

The Consumer Protection Program on E.



coli workshop has been scheduled for Thursday morning, Dec. 1.

Calico said the 2022 fair season has been a good one. "Anecdotally, the season has been fabulous where the weather cooperated, always the nemesis," she said. "Attendance and per-cap spending were very strong and very often in record territory."

Concerns and challenges Calico said IAFE members have been expressing

include, among other issues, safety and security. "...Especially with the increase in gun violence and teenage troublemakers out to find TikTok success," she said.

"Other concerns are the impact of inflation on costs of goods and services needed to produce the fair and finding and keeping fair-time staff due to competitiveness of the job marketplace and rising wage costs," she said.

The IAFE convention planners look at these concerns and make an effort to address them in the educational sessions. They will begin preparing for the 2023 event as soon as the 2022 edition is over and in the history books.

The 2023 IAFE Convention is set for November 26-29, Salt Lake City, Utah.

•fairsandexpos.com

Closing entertainment:  
C. Willi Myles



C. Willi Myles

Comedian C. Willi Myles, "America's Everyday Comedian," will entertain attendees at the Wednesday Closing Celebration, Nov. 30, during the 2022 IAFE Convention in Indianapolis.

|                                                                                                                        |                           |                         |                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Shakers</b><br>                                                                                                     | <b>Mason Jars</b><br>     | <b>Shot Glasses</b><br> | <b>Fish Bowl</b><br>   |
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# International Association of Fairs and Expositions 2022 convention

## EXHIBITOR LISTING

|                                                 |               |                                                 |               |                                                   |                    |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 123iMP                                          | 744, 746      |                                                 |               | North Pole Productions                            | 400                |
| ATV Big Air Tour                                | 224           |                                                 |               | Oscar the Robot by Pro-Bots                       | 500                |
| Agile Ticketing Solutions                       | 936           |                                                 |               | Outdoor Aluminum Inc                              | 720                |
| Agri-cadabra                                    | 325           | Fiserv                                          | 237           | Paradise Artists, Inc.                            | 717                |
| Aim High Canines                                | 920           | Flying Cortes Trapeze Spectacular               | 414           | The Party Company, LLC                            | 342                |
| AMP Live Events LLC                             | 508           | Full Throttle Monster Trucks                    | 232           | PCR Entertainment LLC                             | 845                |
| <b>Amusement Today</b>                          | <b>808</b>    | FunTagg                                         | 201           | Pirate Man Dan                                    | 233                |
| Giovanni Anastasini Forza Entertainment         | 439           | FUSION Talent Group                             | 501           | Play With Gravity                                 | 444                |
| Animal Cracker Conspiracy                       | 440           | Game Show Gurus                                 | 355           | Plymouth Industries                               | 401                |
| Apache Trolleys                                 | 736           | GETZ Transport Solutions                        | 216           | Polka Dot Entertainment, LLC                      | 912                |
| Artists & Attractions                           | 812           | Globe of Death Squad                            | 302           | Populous                                          | 700, 702           |
| AttendStar                                      | 326, 328      | Goat Island Petting Zoo                         | 204           | Powers Great American Midways                     | 636                |
| B3 Security Group LLC                           | 242           | Gooseberry Farm                                 | 643           | Protect The Harvest                               | 509                |
| Balster Magic Productions                       | 443           | Grand Illusions by the Blooms/DinosaurXperience | 504           | The Quack Pack                                    | 214                |
| Bandaloni, One Man Band                         | 418           | Grayscale Event Marketing                       | 615           | Queen Horse Bedding                               | 303                |
| Bear Hollow Wood Carvers                        | 332           | Great American Entertainment Company LLC        | 212           | Aaron Radatz Magical Entertainer                  | 847                |
| Belmont Magic Show                              | 841           | Liz Gregory Talent Agency and Gregory Prod.     | 713           | Regalia Manufacturing Co                          | 647                |
| Benchmark Graphic Co.                           | 221           | Haas & Wilkerson Insurance                      | 519           | Reithoffer Shows, Inc.                            | 614                |
| G.L. Berg Entertainment                         | 601           | Eric Haines                                     | 351           | Resultant                                         | 906                |
| Beyond Spots & Dots                             | 330           | Harmony Artists Inc.                            | 701, 703, 705 | Roadshow Promotions DBA Spoon Mattress            | 244, 246           |
| The Birdman - World Class Bird Shows            | 403           | Heath Tarlin Entertainment                      | 541           | Robert Smith Presents                             | 638                |
| Black Walnut Productions                        | 716           | Highway 96                                      | 205           | Robot Circus                                      | 213                |
| Bleacher Rentals                                | 209           | Hillbilly Bob/Farmer Bob                        | 451, 453      | Romeo Entertainment Group                         | 617                |
| Bons Temps Shavings                             | 339           | HomeTown Mobility                               | 408           | Ronk Security Solutions, LLC                      | 727                |
| Booking House Inc.                              | 946           | Hometown Ticketing                              | 513           | Andy Rotz Entertainment                           | 228                |
| The Johnnie Bubar Show                          | 640           | Hot Glass Academy                               | 219           | Saffire                                           | 428, 430           |
| Paul Bunyan Lumberjack Show                     | 619           | Hot Spot WiFi PODs                              | 542           | Alan Sands Entertainment                          | 313, 315           |
| The Butterfly Encounter                         | 944           | Hotel California                                | 718           | Scootaround Wheelchair & Scooter Rentals          | 230                |
| Cale Moon Country Entertainer                   | 616           | IG Presents                                     | 437           | See Tickets                                       | 544                |
| Adam Calvert Music, LLC                         | 226           | Imagine Exhibitions                             | 714           | Sensational Murcias                               | 243                |
| Canine Stars Stunt Dog Show                     | 247           | Immersive Productions                           | 940           | Shawnee LED & Signs                               | 844, 846           |
| Capitol International Productions               | 712           | J & M Displays                                  | 826           | Shelter Structures America                        | 308                |
| CarnivalWarehouse.com Inc.                      | 604           | j International Management                      | 543           | ShoWorks by Ungerboeck                            | 417                |
| Carolina The Band                               | 353           | JAC Live, LLC                                   | 836, 838      | Signs & Shapes                                    | 217                |
| John Cassidy Magic & Balloons                   | 840           | Jayson Entertainment Group                      | 537           | So Bright Productions                             | 318                |
| Century Services Group                          | 842           | JKJ Insurance                                   | 215           | Southern Bleacher Company Inc.                    | 336                |
| CEW Enterprises/Sport Fence International       | 639           | JKJ Workforce Agency, Inc                       | 301           | Southwest Dairy Farmers                           | 650, 652, 654      |
| Chef Landry                                     | 441           | C.H. Johnson Consulting                         | 745           | Specialty Insurance Agency                        | 645                |
| Chicago Honey Bear Dancers Dance Spectacular    | 809           | Dale Jones Entertainment                        | 605           | Specialty Vehicles                                | 807                |
| Circle City Sidewalk Stompers                   | 740           | K & K Insurance Group Inc.                      | 432           | Spectrum Weather and Specialty Insurance, Inc.    | 715                |
| The Circus Man - Jason D'Vaude                  | 641           | K/O Fairground Planners                         | 536, 538      | Staats Awards                                     | 621                |
| Class Act Performing Artists & Speakers, Inc.   | 306           | Kaliff Insurance                                | 412           | Stage 9 Exhibits                                  | 309                |
| The Coca-Cola Company                           | 803           | Kay Park Recreation                             | 839           | Star Attractions                                  | 600, 602           |
| Colonia Productions                             | 338, 340      | Kern Studios                                    | 405, 407      | Stilt Circus                                      | 324                |
| Conventions, Sports & Leisure International     | 502           | King BMX Stunt Show                             | 208           | Superior Sleep Experience                         | 346                |
| Coronas of Hollywood Fair Entertainment         | 450, 452      | Kingdom Promotions                              | 843           | Swiftly Swine Productions                         | 436                |
| Cowboy Circus - Danny Grant                     | 327           | The Kinkead Entertainment Agency                | 607           | Talley Amusements, Inc.                           | 517                |
| Creative Community Promotions LLC               | 406           | Kiosk Prepaid                                   | 300           | Tap N Go                                          | 402, 404           |
| Cutco Cutlery                                   | 928           | KIS Technologies, LLC                           | 239           | Tarter Farm & Ranch Equipment                     | 830, 832           |
| Cutting Edge Innertainment                      | 305           | Kissel Entertainment LLC                        | 540           | R.J. Thomas Mfg. Co./Pilot Rock                   | 409                |
| dfest®                                          | 420           | Kitchen Craft                                   | 319           | TicketSpice                                       | 343                |
| Dialed Action Sports                            | 218, 220      | Klein's Entertainment LLC                       | 612           | Tixr                                              | 231                |
| Grand Illusions by the Blooms/DinosaurXperience | 506           | Kwik Covers                                     | 203           | Triangle Talent LLC                               | 625                |
| Disc-Connected K9s                              | 416           | Lady Houdini Escape Show                        | 725           | Triton Livestock Equipment                        | 207                |
| The One Man Band, Marc Dobson                   | 613           | LadyLedLuxury                                   | 828           | Tunnel to Towers 9/11 Never Forget Mobile Exhibit | 331                |
| Doc Magic                                       | 729           | The League of Agricultural & Equine Centers     | 515           | Twisted Booking/Chubby Checker                    | 837                |
| DockDogs Inc.                                   | 320           | Leapfrog Entertainment                          | 446           | Uncommon USA                                      | 321                |
| Dominguez Attractions                           | 924           | The Dennis Lee Show                             | 637           | Ungerboeck                                        | 413, 415, 512, 514 |
| DSI dba DIRECTV                                 | 241           | Live Hypnosis Events                            | 938           | Unique Images LLC                                 | 304                |
| EagleHawk One Inc.                              | 314           | Living Zultar                                   | 438           | Universal Attractions Agency                      | 603                |
| Eli Alger and The Faster Horses                 | 742           | LRP Matting                                     | 539           | Variety Attractions Inc.                          | 800                |
| EMC Tickets                                     | 317           | Magic Money                                     | 312           | Venue Smart LLC                                   | 341                |
| Equilibrium Circus                              | 747           | MainGate Tickets                                | 942           | Virtual Ticket Solutions                          | 926                |
| ESCO Security Consulting                        | 236, 238      | Majestik Spectacular                            | 932           | Vital Theatre Company, Inc.                       | 546                |
| Etix                                            | 704           | The Marvelous Mutts                             | 738           | Vortex Weather Insurance                          | 229                |
| Eventeny                                        | 344           | Mason Entertainment                             | 609           | Watershow Productions Inc.                        | 333                |
| EventHub                                        | 206           | McGowan Allied Specialty Insurance              | 424, 426      | WDC Group                                         | 442                |
| EventPro Software                               | 329           | Milord Entertainment                            | 737, 739      | Whirley-DrinkWorks!                               | 445, 447           |
| Extreme Illusions & Escapes                     | 337           | Minotaur Mazes                                  | 824           | Wolves of the World                               | 914                |
| Extreme Sculpting                               | 550, 552, 554 | Mobile Glass Studios                            | 731           | World's Funnest Productions                       | 916, 918           |
| Fair Publishing House                           | 606, 608      | NABS Creative                                   | 345           | W-W Manufacturing Co. Inc.                        | 719, 721           |
| FairEntry                                       | 307           | National Recreation Systems, a Playcore Company | 227           | Youth for the Quality Care of Animals             | 225                |
| Fearless Flores Thrill Show                     | 200, 202      | National Tractor Pullers Association            | 733           | David Yugar Productions                           | 240                |
| Firefighter Show                                | 316           | Nature Hill NV                                  | 741, 743      |                                                   |                    |
| FireGuy Show                                    | 347           | Nitro Circus                                    | 908           |                                                   |                    |

# PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

► Holiday cooking guide — page 20 / State Fair of Texas enjoys 24-day run — page 24

## Anakeesta creates enchanted night experience with Astra Lumina

AT: Tim Baldwin

tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

GATLINBURG, Tenn. — The award-winning **Anakeesta** nature park has offered something new for its visitors. Already boasting a diverse array of activities for all age groups with botanic gardens, scenic towers, a Treetop Skywalk, children's activity areas, a mountain coaster, zipline adventures and more, the unique park now captivates the night.

The park teases: "We're always told to reach for the stars, but what if the stars could reach us?"

And so it begins. Once night falls, the transformation of a specific area of the park becomes **Astra Lumina**. Partnering with **Moment Factory**, a multimedia entertainment studio based in Canada, Anakeesta brings the first collaboration to the United States.

"We had started our conversations with Moment Factory before we had even broken ground on Anakeesta," said **Karen Bentz**, managing partner. "In late 2016, we had heard there was this enchanted night walk — a first of its kind in Canada. We flew to Canada and met with them. They took us to their first installation, **Foresta Lumina**. I could not believe what an unusual walk it was. To us, it was a perfect experience



Anakeesta in Gatlinburg debuted its latest attraction, **Astra Lumina**, in October. The nighttime experience is a special add-on ticket for visitors enjoying the park. COURTESY ANAKEESTA

to have at Anakeesta."

Following that meeting, the Moment Factory team came to Anakeesta to walk the site and explore options.

"It has been long in discussion and planning and design, so for us, this is a huge event," said Bentz. "It's a huge milestone."

Once guests enter **Astra Lumina**, they experience eight distinct zones, some of which have names like **Cosmic Choir**, **Celestial Trail** and **Astral Genesis**.

Moment Factory was established in 2001, and since its inception, it has created more than 450 unique projects globally. Clients include an impressive list, such as **Universal Studios** and **Disney**, **Microsoft**, **Boston Museum of Science** ... and **Madonna** (!), just to name a few. The fast-

growing company now employs 375 people, some with roots at **Cirque du Soleil**, which brings an air of the theatrical to Moment Factory's projects.

Over the years, Bentz, along with her husband **Bob**, traveled to experience subsequent installations.

"Over time, [Moment Factory] has evolved," she told *Amusement Today*. "Each time they have an installation, it is an improvement on the last one. I feel like there is a value to us to have waited six years. Now, they have perfected their experiences and their storytelling is even better than it was in the beginning."

As visitors stroll pathways, they are entranced with light and sound in various settings. It's quite cosmic.

"The basic way to explain it is that it is a



natural setting," said Bentz. "It sets the tone for a nighttime adventure. It essentially marries the wonder and beauty of nature with high tech. It uses lighting, projections, creative sound and customized music. At the start of the journey, guests pass under a portal, the **Astra Archway**, and they enter a world where the stars descend from the sky in a symphony of light and sound."

The experience takes approximately 45 minutes to an hour. Benches are placed along the way for people to pause and take in each area.

"It's almost like chapters in a book," said Bentz. "Each is more enchanting than the last. The information in one 'chapter'

builds the story into the next zone."

Many of the scenes are enshrouded in fog, adding to the mystique. The sound is crisp and ethereal. Whether it is beams of light in dramatic hues, hovering orbs that glow, projection mapping and video or lasers piercing the forest, **Astra Lumina** is designed to mesmerize.

"The **Stardust Rays** are my very favorite," remarked Bentz. "The way we located this one is very unusual. The path comes to a boardwalk that leads to this special valley. The fog sits in that area and when you have these rays of light, you lose all your sense of dimension. You feel like you're floating, like

► See **ASTRA**, page 10

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Astrum Lumina is a permanent addition to Anakeesta and will be available spring through December. The attraction blends nature with high tech in eight distinct zones. COURTESY ANAKEESTA

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### ►ASTRA Continued from page 8

you would in space.”

Since Astrum Lumina opened, management reports that each night is sold out. Guests are allowed to enter in pulsed segments so that no one feels rushed.

“Each zone is distinctly different and has its own immersion of sound and light and music. At the end of the hike, the travelers watch the regeneration of the stars return to the skies above,” said Bentz. “It’s been interesting to hear the comments from people.”

Astrum Lumina is an add-on experience to a daily ticket to the park. The Astrum Lumina area is not open during the daytime. A combination of admission and the special attraction is \$49.99. A discounted ticket is available after 5 p.m.

Astrum Lumina debuted on October 21 and is intended to be a permanent installation. When the park is open weekends only during the harsher winter months of January and February, the operation of Astrum Lumina will be paused but will return in the spring.

“We are looking forward to [extending hours]. We immediately started discussing events that could happen at night — live bands and entertainment. With Anakeesta, the nice thing is you can come in the morning and return at night on the same ticket.”

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# Margaritaville's Pleasure Pier Fun Park progresses, no opening date

AT: Pam Sherborne

psherborne@amusementtoday.com

BILOXI, Miss. — Drivers crossing the bridge from Ocean Springs into Biloxi, Mississippi, have a new sight to see. That sight is the Tide Turner, a 55-meter-tall observation wheel, one of the first rides to be up at the new-but-unopened **Paradise Pier Fun Park** at the Biloxi Margaritaville Resort.

The wheel, manufactured by the Italian ride manufacturer **Technical Park**, has 20 climate-controlled gondolas and offers views extending out to the barrier islands of Mississippi. The lights have been turned on the Tide Turner and it can be seen rotating, but owner of the resort, **Biloxi Lodging**, hasn't announced an opening date yet.

Expectations had been that the park would open sometime in 2022, but with the past and current shipping and supply delays starting with the coronavirus pandemic, everything has slowed.

Yet, progress can still

The wheel at Paradise Pier Fun park features 20 climate-controlled gondolas and is supplied by Technical Park (at right). The park will also be home to a Zamperla Disk-O, also currently under construction (below). AT/GARY SLADE



be seen.

According to park spokesperson **Tessy Lambert**, who was interviewed by a local news agency recently, another high-profile ride also is on the grounds. That is the Aerobar, manufactured by the European company **Aerophile**, a company that

has had success with tethered helium balloons. The Aerobar is a flying bar attached to a balloon that rises inside a frame. The gondola has 16 seats with riders sitting in a circle facing each other, encircling the bar in the center.

Guests will be able to sip cocktails while rising about

120 feet in the air and circling 360 degrees during the ride.

Lambert said they are currently awaiting 12 more rides from Europe. She said that they had been working with **Zamperla** on some of the other attractions about this same time last year.

The Paradise Pier Fun

Park is unique in that it is being built on a 25-acre platform 25 feet high, which creates a parking lot underneath.

Visitors will be able to access the park from the garage, as well as to the resort's Escape Arcade and Entertainment Center. The 55,000-square-foot center opened in 2016, alongside the hotel.

The park also is expected to have food and beverage outlets, as well as games.

When Pleasure Pier Park is completed, it will be one of the largest parks along the Gulf Coast. Many family-friendly attractions were destroyed when Hurricane Katrina made landfall in 2005 and never returned to the coast.

The 25-foot-high platform should help in the event of another storm or hurricane. The height should be sufficient for any storm surge.

In addition, resort owners have been proactive. In the event of a hurricane, the larger rides will be dismantled and moved into storage.

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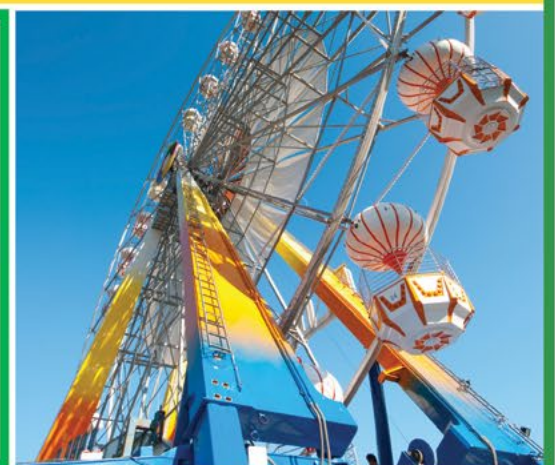
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# B&M leans into past, creates coaster concept for SeaWorld Orlando



The new launch coaster by Bollinger & Mabillard is a first-of-its-kind, and the first to use the Swiss Manufacturer's patented passenger restraint system which utilizes a hydraulic suspension which allows riders to feel as they are rising and lowering on the vehicle's open platform — a sensation which SeaWorld likens to a surfer "hanging 10." COURTESY SEAWORLD

AT: David Fake  
Special to Amusement Today

ORLANDO — On October 18, SeaWorld Orlando announced its newest coaster, a first-of-its-kind "surf coaster" concept from Swiss manufacturer Bolliger & Mabillard (B&M). When it opens in Spring 2023, Pipeline: The Surf Coaster, will be the park's seventh rollercoaster, second launched coaster, and B&M's first time revisiting the stand-up coaster concept since the 1990s.

Once one of B&M's most popular designs,

the stand-up coaster has gained a reputation for being uncomfortable head-bangers, mostly due to the unforgiving bicycle-style seats and over-the-shoulder restraints used on its trains.

The growing reputation and reduced popularity of the style has caused several parks to have their stand-up coasters retrofitted with B&M's floorless trains and marketed as a new coaster. Many coaster enthusiasts and amusement industry insiders considered the stand-up coaster to be a fad of the past.

However, expect SeaWorld Orlando's Surf model coaster to be quite different than its first-generation relatives. With the new concept, B&M appears to have addressed the factors that attributed to their earlier creations being uncomfortable.



► See SEAWORLD, page 15



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Jonathan Smith, Corporate Vice President of Rides and Engineering for SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, announced Pipeline: The Surf Coaster at a media event on November 18. AT/DAVID FAKE

## SEAWORLD Continued from page 14

Based on the early artwork and animations for the ride, B&M has appeared to replace the padded metal over-the-shoulder restraints with vest harnesses, which would greatly reduce, if not eliminate, the headbanging.

Most notably, Pipeline: The Surf Coaster is equipped with B&M's patented "passenger restraint system for roller coasters" which was filed in 2020. This patent addresses the issue of the uncomfortable, rigid, and unforgiving standing seat column design of the early stand-up coasters.

The patent describes a column and seat equipped with a hydraulic system that will allow the seat to slightly move up and down with changing positive and negative forces, which would make for a significantly more comfortable ride for the ride's passengers.

"We have great rela-

tionships with all our ride manufacturers, and Pipeline is a return to B&M, who approached us with this concept, which really fits with our brand. It will be the first time anywhere that a surfing experience is brought to a coaster. That surfing experience is what we are branding here, and this coaster vehicle is specifically designed to create wave-jumping motions through vertical movement, heaving up and down," said Jonathan Smith, Corporate Vice President of Rides and Engineering for SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment.

Further adding to the surfing theme and feel is Pipeline's one inversion. "The wave curl inversion, which is inspired by the 'alley oop,' a real surfing maneuver, where you 'hang ten,' invert and land back on your board," added Smith. "With Pipeline: The Surf Coaster, we're trying to celebrate the entire experience of surfing."



With the opening planned for Spring 2023, B&M coaster track is already onsite for the project in Orlando. AT/DAVID FAKE

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## Housing, improvements coming to Silver Dollar City



BRANSON, Mo. — Silver Dollar City has announced \$30 million of upcoming projects including major improvements. SDC plans to partner with Holtz Builders of Mauston, Wisconsin, to construct an on-site residence hall for interns (above). Furthermore, guests can expect an expanded and airy Heartland Home Furnishings area (below) during the 2023 season. COURTESY SILVER DOLLAR CITY



A white rhinoceros will be arriving at the **Sacramento Zoo**, Sacramento, California, sometime next year as a preview of the rare and endangered species to be housed in a new facility as zoo officials continue working on plans for a potential move to Elk Grove, California.

It's been a year since the zoo announced a partnership with the City of Elk Grove to pursue the potential move out of Sacramento's **Land Park** location.

Zoo officials said the overall project is still several years away from a potential opening. The next step will be an extensive environmental review.

**Blackpool Pleasure Beach** in England extended its Winter Weekends this year to coincide with the extended hours for Blackpool Illuminations. Both events were to run until Nov. 27, every Saturday and Sunday.

The Winter Weekends provided guests access to rides and included a Christmas Grotto and holiday overlays to Adventure Golf.

**Sim Leisure Group** has reportedly struck an agreement to expand its **ESCAPE** theme park brand in Sri Lanka, in addition to the ongoing projects in Oman, China, Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

The group also is planning to build new theme parks in Cameron Highlands and Ipoh, Malaysia.

**International Theme Park Services, Inc. (ITPS)** is celebrating its 40th anniversary as the leisure industry's leading independent consulting firm.

Forty years ago, **Dennis Spiegel**, founder and CEO of ITPS, would have likely been surprised to know that in 2022 his consulting firm would be involved in more than 500 projects in 55 countries. And that heading into 2023, he would be celebrating his firm's 40th year in business.

"In 1983, there was great potential for international growth of the leisure industry and a true need for experienced assistance to those developing projects," Spiegel was quoted as saying. "It was because of this need that I formed ITPS."

The **Legoland Florida Resort** and **Merlin Entertainments** recently

announced in a layoff notice that its food and beverage workers would be working in January for **Aramark Corp.**, according to a Florida Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) notice.

In a notice that went out to the 519 affected employees, the change is a change in Legoland's organizational structure.

The change is anticipated to take place Jan. 15, 2023, and only at the Winter Haven, Florida, location.

A Derbyshire theme park is feeling the pinch after its energy bills sky-rocketed by 110% amid Europe's cost-of-living increases.

**Gulliver's Kingdom**, located in a hillside setting with spectacular views over Matlock Bath, has been welcoming families for more than 40 years.

The family-run Peak District theme park, headed by managing director **Julie Dalton**, has three other theme parks in Warrington, Rotherham and Milton Keynes.

According to a local news agency, Dalton said the energy bills have increased "considerably" in recent months, rising to around one million British pounds (US\$1,176,100.00) across her four countrywide attractions.

Orlando-based ride inventor and U.S. Thrill rides founder LLC **Bill Kitchen** has sold off his patent portfolio to Canadian firm **Martin and Vleminckx**, and plans to "semi-retire" from the attractions business.

The deal, announced Nov. 7, includes various popular rides Kitchen has invented over several years, including the SkyBlazer, Unicoaster, Unicoaster 2.0, Skyspire and G-Storm rides, according to an announcement by Mont-Royal, Quebec-based **Martin and Vleminckx**.

Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

**Kennywood's** Holiday Lights attraction has been chosen as a nominee for **USA Today's** 2022 10 Best Readers' Choice award for the Best Theme Park Holiday Event category.

Holiday Lights returned to the West Mifflin, Pennsylvania, park for another festive season on Saturday, Nov. 19. More than two million twinkling lights illuminate the park, along with more than 20 family-favorite rides, new tasty treats and the nightly tree lighting of the Christmas tree in Pennsylvania.

The **Fort Wayne Zoological Society**, Fort Wayne, Indiana, released a press release stating that pony rides will no longer be featured at the **Fort Wayne Children's Zoo**.

Instead, zoo officials have decided to renovate the space to prepare for new elements that fit the "best long-term strategic interests of the zoo," according to the release. Those new elements include an upcoming Red Panda exhibit as well as some cost-savings improvements.

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# Growth, experience add to Knoebels' Joy Through The Grove

AT: Tim Baldwin

tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

ELYSBURG, Pa. — From COVID to Christmas, the reimagining of an old park tradition at **Knoebels Amusement Resort** has since become an even greater one. However, it didn't come easy.

In 2020, Pennsylvania had some of the more stringent COVID-19 restrictions. As the pandemic started, amusement parks were left wondering if they could even salvage any of their season. Before staff could even be hired, park management was already thinking.

Although the park's season did begin in July, the financial impact, as felt everywhere, was significant. A decision in the spring to potentially bring a Christmas drive-through event to the resort turned out to be a practical one. For the first year, Knoebels offered Joy Through The Grove.

"It was an idea literally kicked around for 20 years," said **Trevor Knoebel**, fourth generation family member. "We did an event for about five years in the '90s but with limited success. We had gift shops and a food stand open and we decorated a little bit of the park. It was a lot of work, and after we ended that, we breathed a sigh of relief. There was little return for us. A few years after that, someone wondered if we



Knoebels management feels having cabins in the campground (above) make their drive-through unique. Holiday scenes and ride recreations are done up in lights during the drive. COURTESY KNOEBELS

could do a drive-through someday. Along came the Halloween season, and that took off — industry-wide. We really focused our energy on that."

It was the pandemic that really made the drive-through idea gel again, particularly after the family had seen numerous light displays the Christmas before. It was decided the timing was right.

"We engaged our electricians and started looking at companies, and Joy Through The Grove was born," said Knoebel. "And this was a period of time when we didn't even have our staff back yet."

**Lauren Muscato**, fourth-generation family member, is credited with supplying the name.

"This was not on my dock-

et of responsibilities when I moved back from California, but I enjoy creative projects and it was something that appealed to me personally," she told *Amusement Today*. "I love to brainstorm names for things."

Muscato said close to 100 names were created, but the final decision came down to deciding between Joy To The Grove or Joy Through The Grove. When it came time to enact the layout, she laid out the scenes.

"We knew our guests would have seen other light displays, so we wanted to make sure we did it well," said Knoebel. "Even in that first year, I was blown away."

"One of the things that makes ours unique is that we have this campground," added Muscato. "We have these cozy cabins right at the heart of our drive-through. It looked like a cute Christmas village. It got a lot of feedback. We found out that people didn't even know we had a campground."

To no one's surprise, the first year presented a learning curve.

"I laid everything out by myself that first year. As a team, you can see what works better," said Muscato.

"Now we know to do more ahead. Time is of the essence," said Knoebel. "We're a little restricted with our Halloween season because we have campers in



our campground until the end of October. We're finding ways to get some things ready that may not be noticed."

"We also learned how eager our guests were to enjoy the Christmas season but also our snacks," laughed Muscato. "We were so underprepared on opening night [in 2020]. We expected people to be cautiously spending, but we couldn't make kettle corn fast enough. They all wanted the biggest snack pack."

Although the new revenue stream exceeded expectations, attendance during its second year dipped slightly.

"I think [year two] was still successful," said **Jon Slodysko**, ride operations manager. "While attendance was slightly lower, what we were able to do was still provide that Knoebels tradition. Now people are coming back year after year in a completely new season. They are tickled that they can drive through the park."

"[In 2020] there wasn't much else to do — no shopping, no restaurants, no sporting events," said Knoebel. "Even though we were down, we were still busier than what we hoped

we would be for year one."

The event continues to grow. Knoebels has made the 2022 version even bigger. With the third year, more displays require more time and pre-planning. The resort has also learned to retain more staff following the Halloween season.

New scenes are being done for 2022, as well as more lighting in outlying cabins along the drive. Knoebels is also implementing newer displays that feature the park's mascots and rides. A second light tunnel is being added that uses a completely different technology from the first covered bridge.

"It's going to be like no other tunnel out there," said Knoebel.

The experience takes about 30 to 40 minutes.

In addition, a Christmas village is open free of charge at Knoebels' adjacent golf course on weekends and not related to the drive-through experience. Photos with Santa and Kozmo are available, as well as a train display and singing reindeer show. **Nickel Plate Bar and Grill** and other food options are also open.



This first light tunnel will be joined by a second for the 2022 event, which will feature completely different technology. COURTESY KNOEBELS

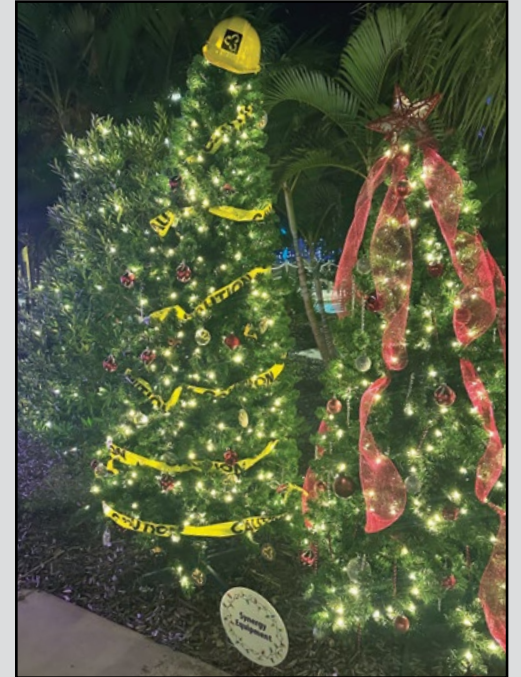
## Parks, attractions showcase annual holiday celebrations



Universal Orlando Resort, Florida, began its Holiday at Universal celebrations November 12. It will run through January 1, 2023. Throughout the entire destination, guests are celebrating a large array of epic festivities featuring some of pop culture's most beloved stories and characters. COURTESY UNIVERSAL ORLANDO



Kings Island, Mason, Ohio, was transformed from "scary to merry" in just a short amount of time as park officials had to ready the park for Winterfest. The holiday event will feature five million lights, ice skating on the Royal Fountain, a parade and the 314-foot-tall Eiffel Tower made into a Christmas tree. COURTESY KINGS ISLAND



Night of a Million Lights, benefitting Give Kids The World Village, returns in 2022 in a new venue: Island H2O Water Park. The event's centerpiece Tree Trail features dozens of custom-decorated, sponsored Christmas trees. All sponsorship dollars benefit Give Kids The World Village. AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON



Dollywood, Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, began lighting up with holiday lighting on November 5 and will continue its Smoky Mountain Christmas celebration until January 1, 2023. The event features six million twinkling lights, live shows and entertainment, Christmas-themed food and beverages along with the park's rides. COURTESY DOLLYWOOD



Lake Compounce, Southington, Connecticut, began celebrating the holidays with Holiday Lights on November 19. It will run through December 23, on select dates. Families are enjoying the magic with live entertainment and engaging activities including Stuff a Bear. Santa also is on hand at the park's Starlight Theater, as are all the treats of the season. COURTESY LAKE COMPOUNCE



Busch Gardens Williamsburg, Virginia, began its Christmas Town celebration on November 11. It will run through January 8, featuring more than 10 million lights and festive holiday decorations. The park also announced new activities including Santa's Fireside Feast. COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS



The five million holiday twinkling lights are just the beginning of the holiday festivities at Hersheypark, Hershey, Pennsylvania. The celebration Hersheypark Christmas Candyland began November 11 and is running through January 1. There also are live shows and entertainment, the Kisses Fountain and Noel, which is a show with 250,000 lights dancing to classic holiday tunes. The Hershey characters will also be on hand. COURTESY HERSEYPARK

# Amusement TODAY

## ANNUAL HOLIDAY COOKING GUIDE

The holidays are a time of many traditions, and along with them, mishaps and accidents. Amusement Today wishes all readers a very happy and safe holiday season, and with that theme, AT asked three professionals representing the "safety" aspect of the amusement industry to share some of their family favorites for our 18th annual recipe pages.



*Darlene Reese*

**Jeff Ellis & Associates**

### Pho Noodle Soup

#### Beef Brisket Broth (10 to 12 servings):

- 4 lbs. of beef bones with marrow
- 4 lbs. of brisket (you can substitute with short rib, eye round steak, meatballs — brisket is easy to work with and very tender and flavorful in the broth)
- 1 large Vidalia (sweet) onion
- ½ lb. of ginger root
- 1 Pho seasoning packet (purchased in any Asian grocery store)
- 1-3 tablespoons of lump/rock sugar (to sweeten the broth)
- Salt, black pepper seasoned to taste
- Pho paste (soup base paste in the Asian grocery store)
- Variety of fresh herbs, vegetables and lime wedges for serving: chopped scallions, cilantro, basil, cilantro, culantro, bean sprouts, sliced sweet onion and lime wedges
- Optional: one Pho-hoa seasoning bag, (small pouches that look like tea bags purchased also in the Asian grocery store)

**Cooking instructions:** Rinse the beef bones and briskets with cold water. Bring a large pot of water to boiling. Add the bones and brisket to the boiling pot of water and add some salt to minimize the strong beef flavor. Continue cooking for 10 minutes. Remove the bones and brisket. Rinse them with cold running water. Empty the pot and clean it. Refill the pot with water again and place back on the stove and bring the pot of water to a boiling point again before returning the beef bones and brisket back to the pot. Cook for a few minutes and lower the heat to simmer allowing it cook for 3 to 4 hours. Make sure the broth is clear during the simmering. If it is not clear, remove the beef bones and brisket again, rinsing them, cleaning the pot, bringing a new pot of water to a boil before returning the beef bones and brisket to the water. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees. While the broth is simmering for the three to four hours, begin prepping the ginger root. Wash and peel the ginger root. Slice it length wise. Peel the sweet onion. Place the sliced ginger and onion into a roasting pan, cover it and bake 45 minutes. After three or four hours, add the Pho seasoning (bag) by tying the bag onto the handle of the pot and making sure the seasoning bag is mostly submerged. (add a pho seasoning tea bag for additional flavor.) During the three-to-four-hour simmer cook period, periodically check on the brisket. If it becomes extremely tender and starts to fall apart, remove it from the broth, slice and set aside. At this point, you can now add the baked onion, ginger slices, and some scallion roots if available. Also add rock sugar, salt, pho paste if available, to taste. Continue to cook for 1/2 hour longer under simmering condition. After ½ of additional simmering, the broth is ready. Remove the beef bones and brisket if it is not already removed. Toss the bones. Slice the brisket; set aside for serving. Bring a separate pot of water to boiling to cook the rice noodles for serving. While waiting for the water to boil, fill your serving bowls with hot broth adding heaping ladles of broth to fill bowls ½ to 2/3 full adding basil and coriander leaf if available. Once the pot of water is boiling, add pho rice noodles into the pot. Must be stirred to cook evenly. The rice noodles cook within 15 seconds once you add them to boiling water. To serve, transfer the rice noodles to a bowl prefilled with warm/hot broth. Before serving, add sliced pieces of the brisket and any fresh herb, vegetable toppings. Serve with lime wedges, siracha, and hoisin sauce on the side for dipping meats or adding directly to the broth. Lastly toss in additional fresh herbs and vegetables such as cilantro, basil, bean sprouts, culantro, sliced sweet onion, chopped scallions, hot peppers, and fresh lime juice into serving bowls as desired.

*Patty Beazley*

**International Ride Training**

### Southern Sweet Potato Casserole

I'm not a huge sweet potato fan, but this dish is delicious. Definitely a recipe pulled out for the holidays and not for those watching their waistline! But if you pass this recipe up, you are missing out!



#### Filling:

- ½ stick of butter
- 4 large sweet potatoes
- ¼ cup of milk
- ¼ cup of good bourbon
- ½ cup of sugar
- 1 ½ Tsp of Vanilla
- 2 large eggs

#### Topping:

- 1 ½ cups of brown sugar, packed
- ½ cup of flour
- 1 stick of butter (soft)
- 1 cup of crushed pecans

**Directions:** For the sweet potatoes, peel and cube. Place in a large pot of salted water, bring to a boil, then lower the heat to simmer and cook until the potatoes are very tender. 15-20 minutes. Drain and mash the sweet potatoes. For the filling: Preheat the oven to 350F. Use non-stick spray for baking dish. Take mashed sweet potatoes and add butter, milk, sugar, vanilla, eggs and bourbon. Transfer to baking dish. For the topping: Combine the flour and softened butter in a medium bowl until moist and mixture clumps together. Stir in the pecans. Spread mixture over the top of the sweet potatoes in an even layer. Bake at 350 F until casserole is set in the middle and golden on top. (Usually 30 minutes.) Serve hot and enjoy!

*M.J. Brewer*

**AIMS International**

### Potica

#### Dough ingredients:

- 1 cup milk • 1 cup butter • 2 tsp. salt
- (Heat above ingredients until butter melts)
- 2 packages of active yeast • 3 eggs
- 4 cups all-purpose flour (sifted)



**Directions:** Combine the milk, butter and salt into a saucepan and heat only until butter melts. Remove from heat. Dissolve yeast in warm water (according to directions on package) and wait until it becomes foamy (approx. 5 minutes). Add activated yeast to milk mixture. Beat the three eggs and add to milk mixture after it has cooled slightly to lukewarm. Add the milk mixture to the flour and mix until smooth and fully incorporated. Dough should be sticky, but it should pull away from the sides of the bowl. Add more flour if needed. Cover bowl with a cloth and let stand in a warm place to rise (one or more hours). Dough should double in size.

**Filling ingredients:** • 1 ¾ cup honey • 2 cups finely ground pecans or walnuts • 1 tsp cinnamon • 1 cup whipped cream • 1 stick melted butter

**Making the roll:** Heat honey, ground nuts and cinnamon until warm, remove from heat and fold in the whipped cream. On a heavy floured work surface, take half the dough and roll out (with a rolling pin) to a very thin (1/8 inch thick) large circle. Brush the surface of the circle of dough with the melted butter and spread a thin layer of the honey/nut mixture on the surface of the dough reaching all the way to the edges. Start at one edge of the dough and carefully roll the dough into a long tube and then fold the dough tube into thirds and placed in a greased loaf pan. Brush the top of the filled dough roll with melted butter. Repeat process with other half of dough. Bake in a 350-degree oven for one hour or until golden brown on top. Thinly slice and serve warm.

# Five Star Parks acquires Craig's Cruisers FEC venues in Michigan

MICHIGAN — **Five Star Parks & Attractions** has completed the acquisition of the **Craig's Cruisers** locations in Grand Rapids, Holland and Muskegon, Michigan. Five Star now operates 19 family entertainment centers (FECs) in nine states.

Five Star and its investment partner, **Fruition Partners, LLC**, have sought out FEC's that are already experiencing success within the industry but that have a desire to grow or improve and can, therefore, benefit from the expertise and financial backing offered by Five Star and its leadership team.

Craig's Cruisers were among the parks that attracted Five Star's attention because the family-run business, which was established in 1979, has a reputation for building and operating some of the best FEC's in the country. From its perspective, the team at Craig's Cruisers was intrigued by Five Star's ability to provide the people, resources and systems to make a brand even better at an enviable pace.

"Five Star brings a whole team of experienced professionals from the industry," said **Jeff Gebhart**, CEO of Craig's

Cruisers. "They have an appetite for growth, and we're very excited to see what's next for Craig's Cruisers."

Five Star will continue the legacy established by Craig Cihak and his parents, **Ron** and **Donna Cihak**, in the resort town of Silver Lake, Michigan, 43 years ago. What began as a simple track with eight

go-karts has evolved into a full-fledged park featuring a variety of activities. The family built a second location in another seasonal, tourism-driven locale, Muskegon, in 1990, then a third in Holland in 1994.

For the company's 20th anniversary in 1999, Cihak decided to modify the formula a bit by adding a

Grand Rapids location that was committed to delivering year-round, indoor family fun. That site has evolved into a venue that also offers private party and meeting space, plus a 700-seat pizza restaurant. A 36,000-square-foot addition in 2018 included a trampoline park, ninja warrior course, two-level laser-tag arena, indoor roller

coaster, and several large outdoor rides and attractions.

"You'd be hard pressed to find someone from our areas who hasn't hosted or attended a birthday party at one of our locations," Gebhart said. "We take great pride in creating memorable experiences for our communities."

► See FIVE, page 22



After acquiring the three Michigan Craig's Cruisers locations, Five Star Parks & Attractions now has 19 FECs under its ownership. COURTESY FIVE STAR PARKS & ATTRACTIONS

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## ►FIVE

Continued from page 21

"We're big fans of the Craig's Cruisers parks and have always been impressed by the quality of their entertainment offering, which we consider best in class," said John Dunlap, CEO of Five Star Parks & Attractions. "They have a tremendous leadership team with decades of experience in the family

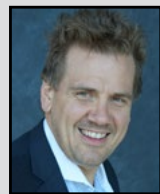
entertainment industry, and their focus on clean, safe fun is in perfect alignment with the mission of our company. We look forward to building upon the 40-year legacy that Craig's Cruisers has established in west Michigan, and we're excited to evolve the parks in ways that will benefit their guests, employees and communities into the future."

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jrobinson@amusementtoday.com

**The Interlock**, a mixed-use property developed by **SJC Ventures** in the heart of Atlanta, announced its tenant **Sandbox VR**, a full-body virtual reality entertainment experience, opened on November 11, 2022.

"Atlanta is, by far, the Sandbox VR location we've received the most requests to open," **Steve Zhao**, founder of Sandbox VR, said in a press release. "We are thrilled the Atlanta community has welcomed us with open arms and proud to partner with SJC Ventures to open our newest location in The Interlock, one of the hottest entertainment areas in this vibrant city."

Sandbox VR's location at The Interlock is a 5,500 square-foot entertainment space featuring four private rooms for virtual reality gameplay called holodecks. Each holodeck enables groups of up to six players to explore virtual worlds, relying on each other to succeed in games designed to be social experiences. Together with friends, family, or co-workers, players are equipped with a VR headset, a haptic vest, a backpack, and motion sensors on their wrists and ankles.

**Fridley Theatres**, an Iowa-based movie theater company, has announced it is developing a theater and entertainment center in Tiffin, Iowa's **Park Place** development.

The complex — which is expected to be called **The Palms Theatres, IMAX, & Family Entertainment Center** — will include 16 lanes of bowling, an arcade, laser tag, gaming space, a full restaurant, bar and outdoor patio. The restaurant/bar will offer specialty and classic appetizers, entrees, desserts, and cocktails. Guests seeing a movie have the option to pick up and take food and beverage items into the auditorium.

Fridley Theatres anticipates groundbreaking ceremonies in the upcoming months.

**The Elementary** in Morrison, Tennessee, has served the community as a fitness center for the past several years. The former **Morrison High School** building is now a full-fledged family entertainment center.

**Detention @The Elementary** offers up everything from a full arcade to a two-story laser tag arena, miniature golf, a rock climbing wall and golf simulators. Co-owner **Bernadette Doud**, who

purchased the facility in 2018 with her husband **Dwayne Doud**, said she has a long history with the former school building.

"It was a high school first, my aunt actually graduated from here," Doud said. "I grew up in Shady Grove and actually went to elementary school here." With a background running entertainment complexes, Doud said a full on family entertainment facility seemed to be something the Morrison community was in need of.

The former **Yankee Candle** store in Williamsburg, Virginia, is now turning into an upscale bowling and entertainment center. The Williamsburg City Council voted unanimously to award a revenue-sharing incentive to **Uptown Alley**, a family entertainment center that plans to open in 2023.

The city council stated that the location will feature upscale bowling, duckpin bowling, an arcade, a chef-driven restaurant and the latest in audio/video technology. The awarded incentive is a performance-based revenue-sharing agreement. It grants a percentage of the taxes that Uptown Alley will pay to the city over a five-year period. The incentive is capped at \$600,000 and will be used for exterior improvements to modernize the building.

"With the current economic challenges, Uptown Alley is truly thankful for the support of Williamsburg, as they have been instrumental in helping us move this project forward," said Owner **Steven Moore**. "We are excited to see how our partnership continues to grow."

**Malibu Jack's** indoor theme park celebrated the grand opening of its Lafayette, Indiana, location with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Friday, November 11, 2022.

The 116,000 square foot indoor theme park sits in the **Tippecanoe Mall** in the location of a former Sears store. The new location is the chain's first outside of the state of Kentucky.

"This is our fourth location," said **Steve Hatton**, vice president of Malibu Jack's. "We are in Lexington, Louisville, and Ashland, Kentucky, and now Lafayette, Indiana."

Hatton attributed a mutually beneficial opportunity for the Tippecanoe Mall as well as Malibu Jack's that brought about this new location — the opportunity for the mall to utilize then-empty space as well as for Malibu Jack's to expand.



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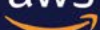
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# State Fair of Texas enjoys 24-day run with increased attendance

AT: B. Derek Shaw

bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

DALLAS, Texas — "This year millions of people from around the globe had the opportunity to fulfill their annual tradition of enjoying the State Fair of Texas," said **Mitchell Glier**, State Fair of Texas president. "Attendees savored the food, rode rides and watched shows and football games under sunny skies. At the same time, we employed thousands of seasonal workers. We thank those who attended; their presence will allow us to continue to support the mission of the fair as a nonprofit through our community initiatives."

The official attendance of the 136th annual month-long event was 2,547,289, 15.6% higher than 2021's more than 2.2 million fairgoers. The highest attended day was Saturday, October 8, with 207,380 people. There were a dozen other days with more than 100,000 in Fair Park. The theme was "Treats of Texas."

The State Fair of Texas operates an independent ride midway with 74 total rides, of which 29 were kiddie ones. There were 25 carnival pro-



Attendance was up 15% over last State Fair of Texas, with 2,547,289 people coming through the turnstiles. The Texas Star (above right), owned by the State Fair of Texas, is run by Tom and Mary Talley. It is always one of the top rides at the fair. This year, 166,000 rides were taken on the 166-foot wheel. AT/GARY SLADE

viders bringing anywhere from one to seven rides. Operators included Alamo Amusements Inc., Amusement Management International, Bishop Amusement Rides, B-Thrilled Attractions, Caprice Enterprise, D&K Amusements, Fair of Fun, Fair Ride Entertainment, Great American Entertainment, JOY RIDE, Laser Fair, Lauther Amusements, Lone Star Entertainment, M&C

Attractions, McBubbles LLC, Mr. Ed's Magical Midways, Pinnacle Fair Equipment Inc., Prime Pacific Entertainment, Rose's Rides LLC, Sky Spectacle, Inc, State Fair Spectacular, Talley Amusements, Triple T Amusement, Wanderlust Amusement and Wood Entertainment Company.

There were six new rides at the fair. They included Sky Race (Zamperla), D&K

Amusements; Pump & Jump (Zamperla), also D&K; Cliff Hanger (Dartron), Lauther Amusements; Fun House (Funni Frite), M&C Attractions; Frog Hopper (S&S-Sansei) Triple T Amusement and Puppy Roll (Sellner Manufacturing), also Triple T.

The five most popular rides among fairgoers were Texas Skyway (Doppelmayr), run by Mike Demas; Texas Star wheel (SDC), operated

by Tom and Mary Talley; Love Bug (Mack Rides), run by Maurice Haworth, Pirate Ship (Huss Rides), operated by Steve Edens and Top O' Texas Tower (Intamin), run by Mike Demas. There were more than 166,000 rides taken on the Texas Star Ferris wheel alone.

Midway revenue for rides and games was up by more than 10% over 2021 figures, with the majority going to vendors. In the games arena, more than 430,000 plush prizes, valued at over \$1.47 million, were won on the midway.

"The safety of the fairgoers always remains our top priority year after year, which is why we handpick each ride that enters our midway to make sure it fulfills our extensive requirements," said **Rusty Fitzgerald**, senior vice president of operations. "Our ride and game owners always bring an outstanding level of dedication to their work, and this year was no exception. Thank you to everyone for all of their hard work!"

"The State Fair of Texas is an event I look forward to every year. The pure thrill and excitement our guests have during the fair is an incredible sight to witness," said **Christina Haworth** of Prime Pacific Amusements. "Working with other knowledgeable owners and a positive fair team truly separates the State Fair of Texas from the others."

There were many spe-

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► See TEXAS, page 26



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# EVERY RIDE SHOULD BE A STAR





A Wisdom Tornado, brought in by Laser Fair, was one of 74 rides at the fair. (above left). Above right is one of the floats in the nightly Starlight Parade that also featured life-size puppets and animated characters in ornate costumes.  
AT/SAMMY PICCOLA; COURTESY STATE FAIR OF TEXAS

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## ► TEXAS

Continued from page 24

cial promotions that provided additional value. They included a season pass, good for all 24 days of operation, a premium one-day admission, discounted admissions on Mondays and Thursdays for adults, seniors and children, along with value days on Tuesdays and Thursdays with special code for those subscribers to the Big Tex Insider online newsletter. Thrilling Tuesdays offered discounts on the midway for most rides.

On opening day, those who brought two jars of peanut butter got in for \$10. The collection was for the **North Texas Food Bank**. The food bank also benefitted every Wednesday from fairgoers who brought five canned food items, receiving admission for only \$5.

Thursdays were senior days with those 60 and older getting in for \$5. Those same days, guests saved while snacking during Thrifty Thursdays, where participating food vendors offered one of their signature menu items at a reduced price, ranging from mini versions to regular-size items.

Other promotions included participating **McDonalds** location admission discount coupons and military and first responder appreciation days. Weeknights featured reduced admission after 5 p.m.

*Amusement Today* asked about the media mix and advertising budget. "We take an integrated approach to marketing and communications," said **Jennifer Schuder**, senior vice president, marketing. "The fair leverages targeted marketing to fair fans through email, social media, text, and direct mail to support advanced ticket sales. Print, radio, broadcast and paid social media is used to generate brand awareness in combination with our public relations outreach and earned media efforts. This approach allows the fair to generate ticket revenue while keeping the marketing budget under \$1 million."

Some of the finalists in the Big Tex Choice Awards food competition in the

► See TEXAS, page 27

## ►TEXAS

Continued from page 26

savory category included deep fried BLT, fried charcuterie board and deep-fried lasagna. In the sweet group was deep fried Rocky Road with **Blue Bell** Ice Cream and peanut butter paradise. New to the fair were bayou bowls, Cajun lobster bisque croquettes, cookies and cream mini donuts on a stick, deep fried praline cheesecake egg-roll and fried soul food egg-roll, among others.

A fair highlight included the nightly Starlight Parade with floats, life-size puppets and animated characters in ornate costumes. It was created by **Kern Studios**, New Orleans.

Free concerts were held on the **Chevrolet** main stage, with **Ashanti**, **La Fiera de Ojinaga**, **Trace Adkins**, **Night**

**Ranger** and **La Mafia** drawing the largest crowds. All concerts and live music were included with fair admission.

"The State Fair of Texas saw fewer challenges with hiring seasonal employees for the 2022 fair than the 2021 fair. This can be attributed to the decline of COVID, the fair no longer mandating vaccines and the increase of the starting hourly pay rate from \$12.38 to \$15.21. In 2022, 65% of seasonal employees who worked in 2021 returned for 2022," said **Margaret Hannah** State Fair of Texas director of HR/IT. "Each year, we promote more than 2,000 job opportunities with the State Fair. We work with the PR and marketing teams to reach folks across the DFW metroplex, with a special focus on our neighbors in South Dallas. We're very fortunate to have folks who return year

after year, and for those who have worked three or more fairs, we even offer a scholarship for our employees or their dependents to pursue higher education."

"As we close the doors on the 2022 State Fair of Texas, we are incredibly grateful to all of those who came together with their friends and families at the annual exposition," said **Karissa Condoianis**, senior vice president of public relations.. "By simply having fun at the Fair, your support helps contribute to our vendors and their small businesses, creates thousands of job opportunities for the North Texas community, and supports the State Fair of Texas' signature programs."

The 2023 edition takes place September 29 through October 22.

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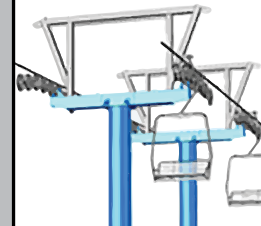
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# WATER PARKS & RECREATION

► News Splash — page 30

## Epic Waters' FlowaPalooza grows considerably in its third year

AT: Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

GRAND PRAIRIE, Texas — In conjunction with the 2022 FlowTour World Championship, **Epic Waters Indoor Waterpark** once again was the culmination of the competition.

"We are absolutely stoked to have Epic Waters host the world championship for the FlowTour," said **FlowRider** President and COO **Marshall Myrman**. "The support and passion they show for the sport is unparalleled, and they really put on a fantastic event any time they have the opportunity. The effort they put into the event makes the participants feel like the pros they are!"

**FlowaPalooza** is the brainchild of **Richard Coleman**, CEO of **American Resort Management**, which operates the water park. This is the third year for the event to take place at Epic Waters, and it has grown significantly.

Epic Waters is part of EpicCentral, a growing development that is part of the Grand Prairie Parks and Recreation department. The campus offers several facilities around a central lake. Although a fountain light show was



planned to make its debut at the event, delays with a pump held that at bay. However, the Grand Lawn was full of activities for the community. The purpose of making FlowaPalooza a weekend event was community involvement. Food trucks, vendors, live music, a beer garden, performers and games and activities for families filled the EpicCentral complex. The event was free, and residents could watch the athletes compete on the FlowRider inside Epic Waters without having to pay admission.

"Last year we tried to get additional vendors and experiences between our

Competitors were airborne on several maneuvers.  
AT/TIM BALDWIN

two facilities, **The Epic Recreation Center** and Epic Waters," said **Michael Hays**, general manager, Epic Waters. "We knew the grand vision Rick Coleman had for FlowaPalooza was to incorporate that with EpicCentral and the Grand Lawn out front. And that's always been the goal — to activate all the facilities EpicCentral has and to come together to put on one hell of a show."

The event was primarily marketed to live music lovers and Dallas-Fort Worth families seeking budget-friendly fun.



Secondary markets are FlowRider enthusiasts and Epic Waters fans. The festival was free of charge, including parking. The event also calls attention to the sport to help encourage the development of a stronger community of FlowRiders.

The event demands a lot from its host facilities.

"That's the great thing of American Resort Management; we live on teamwork," said Hays. "Representatives from our corporate offices as well as two of our other sister properties — **Lagoonfest Texas** in Texas City and **Parrot Island** in Fort Smith,

► See EPIC, page 30



Live music was offered indoors and out during the event (above left). Performances engaged attendees, such as this circus booked in for the event (above middle). An awards ceremony and dinner for all attendees capped off the championship (above right). AT/TIM BALDWIN



EpicCentral provided numerous games and activities for families during FlowaPalooza. AT/TIM BALDWIN

## ►EPIC

Continued from page 29

Arkansas — to assist us. Everyone is having a great time and appreciative of what we're doing."

**Beth Owens** is co-founder and marketing strategist for **Brand Era**, a firm that handles the marketing for Epic Waters Indoor Waterpark and the FlowaPalooza event.

"Our client Epic Waters was pleased with the turnout," said Owens. "Since client satisfaction is our top goal, that means we're happy, too! It certainly was exciting to see so many people, many of them first-time visitors to Epic Waters/EpicCentral, enjoying live music and family fun activities like Zorb ball and laser tag. Our hope is that these new-to-us guests or visitors who might have been rediscovering Epic Waters after the pandemic will keep the water park in mind for upcoming birthday and holiday parties, and for season passes once school lets out."

Other satisfying outcomes of the event included the opportunity to support the "shop small" BoHo artisan market, where guests were able to snag one-of-a-kind or handmade finds.

"The feedback the water park received from the FlowTour World Championship competitors was great," said

Owens. "They reported a wonderful, welcoming experience."

Competitors came from as far as Finland.

"We continue to hear from our FlowRiders that come year after year that it gets better every year," Hays told *Amusement Today*. "They always mark our facility as *the* place to come for the tour stop. We are always voted the best tour stop of the year."

"Our impression is that the event was a big hit with families, who particularly seemed to enjoy the variety of kid-focused activities, such as face painting and circus acts, happening parallel with more grownup offerings, like the beer garden and artisan market," said Owens. "Much like Epic Waters, FlowaPalooza offers something for everyone, whether you're a parent or a kid, a thrill chaser or laid-back fun seeker. We're already thinking about how to elevate our marketing game to attract more visitors next year, with a goal of positioning FlowaPalooza as an annual must-do fall festival and a great option for free family fun."

Epic Waters opened in January 2018 and received Leading Edge and Wave Review Awards in 2018 from the **World Waterpark Association**, "Best of Big D" from *D Magazine* in 2019 and Best of Aquatics from *Aquatics International Magazine*.



## NEWSPLASH

AT: Jeffrey L. Seifert

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**Canfor Leisure Pool** in Prince George, British Columbia, Canada, opened to the public on November 14. As seems to be common with recent projects, the pool faced a number of challenges, such as supply issues, resulting in a delay; and it incurred a CA\$ 2.876 million cost overrun.

The finished facility features a six-lane, 25-meter lap pool and a 25-meter teaching pool that sit side-by-side and comprise the main pool area. Additional amenities include a third leisure pool that connects to a lazy river, a current pool with a gradual sloped entry, water-slide, and a splashpad/waterplay area. Two **NinjaCross** obstacle courses are suspended from the ceiling and can be lowered into the main lap pool allowing that pool to support multiple activities. Outside of the pools are dedicated male and female locker rooms with sauna and steam areas; a large universal changing room; barrier-free accessible shower rooms; classrooms and a viewing area for the pools.

Significant attention has been paid to making the pool fully accessible, with features including dedicated wheelchair-accessible, seniors and family parking stalls; accessible changing rooms; handicap lifts into all three pools; level entry into two of the pools and stairs with handrails into all three pools; braille signage and other features. Access in and out of the change rooms is at the shallowest ends of the pools to decrease the likelihood of falls into deep water.

The facility also pays homage to native people from that area. A wall of indigenous art will be featured in the lobby along with a mural and statue by local artists. The pools have signage in both English and Dakelh, the language of the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation.

The **Wenatchee City Pool** in Washington state is scheduled to receive \$2 million in repair. City councilors accepted a construction bid in October allowing the work to proceed. The pool will close at the end of July next year for the work, which should be completed in late October. **The Pool Company, Inc.** will replace the pool liner, boiler and piping underneath the pool.

City council hopes to extend the life of the aging facility about 10 years — long enough for the city to construct a new regional aquatic center.

The new center could include a 50-meter Olympic-size indoor or outdoor pool, splash pad, zero-entry children's pool, waterslides and a picnic area. The center could be coupled with a sports

complex option that would include sports courts and fields.

Funding for the facility still needs to be determined. An existing public facility district law was used to support the **Town Toyota Center** and could be used for the aquatic/sports center, but that will be investigated by the city of Wenatchee.

**Walt Disney World's Blizzard Beach** reopened in November with new touches inspired by the popular animated film *Frozen*. The new movie-inspired additions include statuettes of Olaf and his Snowgie pals in the wading pool at Tike's Peak as well as Anna and Elsa's igloo castle. There are also *Frozen*-themed menu items in the park.

For a limited time through the holidays, there will be additional holiday-themed treats, snowfall, festive inner tubes and a meet-and-greet with a tropical-dressed Santa.

Blizzard Beach closed in January to undergo a lengthy refurbishment. It still maintains its original theme of a melting ski resort. With the reopening of Blizzard Beach, the resort's other water park, **Typhoon Lagoon**, closed for refurbishment for an undisclosed length of time.

In October, the city council for Grapevine, Texas, approved zoning for **Stand Rock Hospitality** to build the **Grapevine Resort Water Park**. This will be the city's third major water park and the second largest development after the **Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center**. It will compete with the Gaylord and with **Great Wolf Lodge Grapevine**, both of which are located less than four miles away from the new resort.

Stand Rock originally introduced plans for a Texas resort in 2016 and gained approval in 2018. However, the development stalled and the city permits expired. Studies back then showed the location, just north of **DFW International Airport**, could support a third water park resort and would not negatively affect the two existing resorts.

Current plans call for a 12-story resort comprised of 400 hotel rooms and 166 timeshare units. The resort will also include a 95,000-square-foot indoor water park, 24,000 square feet of meeting space and 65,000 square feet of entertainment space.

Stand Rock Hospitality's portfolio includes **Wilderness Hotel & Golf Resort** in Wisconsin, **Wilderness at the Smokies** in Tennessee and **Camelback Lodge & Indoor Waterpark** in the Poconos Mountains region of Pennsylvania.

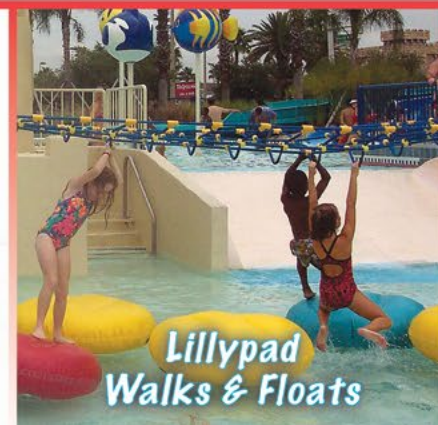


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# BUSINESS & NEWSMAKERS

► Alberto Zamperla passes away — pages 35 / Woman of Influence: Jennifer Giesike — page 36

## World Waterpark Association trade show returns to Las Vegas

AT: Jeffrey Seifert  
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

LAS VEGAS, Nevada — Originally scheduled for 2020 to celebrate the 40th anniversary, the WWA show finally took place at the “new” **Caesars Forum Convention Center** this past October. Close to 1,400 attendees enjoyed quality time in educational classes, networking opportunities or checking out the latest products or innovations on the trade show floor at the 42nd Annual **World Waterpark Association** Symposium and Trade Show. The four-day symposium took place October 4 to 7, 2022, with the trade show exhibition hall open on October 5 and 6.

The **Caesars Forum Convention Center** is the newest addition to the **Caesars Entertainment** family. The 550,000-square-foot facility includes 300,000 square feet of flexible meeting space and houses the two largest pillarless ballrooms in the world. The center has direct access to more than 8,500 hotel rooms at **Harrah's Las Vegas** — which served as the WWA host hotel, the **Linq Hotel + Experience**, and **Flamingo Las Vegas** hotels. The center also shares a monorail stop with Harrah's and the Linq making for easy access to multiple hotels along the Las Vegas strip. The center was scheduled to make its debut on March 18, 2020. However, Nevada governor **Steve Sisolak** declared a state of emergency on March 12, 2020, and five days later



The general session served as the official kickoff to WWA Show 2022 and preceded the opening of the trade show floor (above left). Accepting the Golden Ticket Award from AT's Jeffrey Seifert is Rick Hunter, ProSlide's chairman and chief executive officer (above right). AT/TIM BALDWIN



ordered the closure of non-essential businesses in the state. The facility sat unused for most of the year. The WWA Show scheduled for October was cancelled. The 2021 show was already contracted to be in San Antonio, Texas, so the first opportunity to reschedule was 2022.

Education is key to the symposium. More than 120 speakers shared best practices on topics that meant the most to attendees. These included hiring and recruitment, operational safety, new revenue streams and maintenance.

Although the symposium officially ran from October 4 through October 7, events and certification courses started on Saturday, October 1, with the first of a two-day **StarGuard Elite** Instructor Development Course. On October 2, the first day of a two-day **Aquatic Factory Operator Certification** Course took place. Another two-day course, the **Certified**

**Pool Operator Certification** Course, likewise began on October 2. The first of three courses of the **Ellis and Associates** Lifeguard Instructor Licensing Program also began October 2.

A number of WWA University offerings took place on October 4, including courses in water park maintenance, water quality certification and water park design. October 4 was also the day of the WWA Annual Golf Tournament at the **Legacy Golf Club** in Henderson, Nevada. Designed by acclaimed golf course architect Arthur Hills, it is considered one of the finest courses in southern Nevada. The tournament offered a fun and memorable way for attendees to network in a relaxing environment.

Wednesday began bright and early for a few attendees with some committee meetings starting as early as 7:30

a.m. The rest of the morning was full of activity with more workshops, roundtable discussions and meetings. Finally, as the afternoon drew near everyone clamored to find a seat for the opening general session at 11:30 a.m.

Beginning with a welcome from WWA President **Rick Root**, the multi-media session included an address from WWA chair **Andrew Chafatelli**, WWA news and announcements and a plethora of recognition and awards leading up to the 2022 Hall of Fame inductees (see sidebar). At the conclusion of the opening general session, everyone headed to lunch on the show floor, and the main part of the WWA Show 2022 was underway.

On Wednesday and Thursday, attendees had the opportunity to spend time on the exhibit floor talking with knowledgeable people eager to introduce their products

and answer questions. The trade show floor also served as the location for lunch both days allowing for more interaction between attendees and exhibitors. The usual players were there with **WhiteWater** and **ProSlide** grabbing the spotlight with large booths, huge TV monitors and colorful display models showing off each of the company's catalogue of attractions. While the show floor had the expected big waterslide companies such as ProSlide, WhiteWater, **SplashTacular** and **Fibrart**, noticeably absent was **Polin Waterparks** which was having some organizational difficulties back home in Turkey, although **Söhret Pakis**, Polin's director of marketing and communications was present on Wednesday to receive an Executive Board Award.

Suppliers **CPI**, **Rave Sports**, **Tube Pro**, **Zebec**,

► See WWA, page 33



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## ►WWA

Continued from page 32

and Zpro, were touting their particular brands of inflatables, tubes, rafts, mats, lifejackets and other water park essentials.

Taking a project from concept to reality requires a construction firm and several were on hand to offer their services to those looking to build a new park or expand or re-create an existing park. Those familiar with the industry know a water park is lot more than just pools, slides and lazy rivers. Water has to be pumped and filtered and treated and sometimes even heated. Several companies were showing off products that pump, filter and clean. Both water chemical and chemical alternative treatments were displayed to make certain that water quality never becomes an issue.

Vendors for just about anything needed to successfully run an aquatic facility could be found at the WWA show. Two days provided ample opportunity for facility owners and managers to discuss concerns,



Attendees enjoyed perfect weather and a spectacular evening at the annual reunion party hosted by Cowabunga Bay in Henderson (above left). AT/TIM BALDWIN

look for new items or have the opportunity to meet with current suppliers face-to-face.

**Tina Hatcher**, the president of **3i Advertising/PR** told *Amusement Today*, "I feel there's a lot more networking opportunities [at this show]. People are willing to share their best experiences and also where things went wrong, and everybody is striving for all parks that are here to be the best park that they can be."

A highlight of the week

was the Annual Reunion Party. **Cowabunga Bay** was host and put on a fantastic evening. Bus transportation was provided from Harrah's over to Henderson, where the water park is located. Although the park was not open, many of the slides were running so guests could see the waterflow. Tours were provided and attendees had the opportunity to ask questions. Owner/General Manager **Shane Huish** was

on hand to personally make everyone feel welcome and to make sure the event ran smoothly. Food and drink were plentiful and comfortable seating provided countless opportunities for social interaction to network and simply have fun. The evening was topped off with an exciting fireworks display. It was a resounding success.

Keynote sessions took place on Thursday and Friday, with Thursday's session highlighting the Wave Review Award. Keynote speaker **Merit Kahn**, a certified emotional intelligence expert, presented "Open Minds Open Doors: What To Do If Opportunity Doesn't Knock Loud Enough." During the session Kahn discussed that "open for business" is more than just opening the doors. It means owners, operators and managers are open to ideas, solutions, questions, discussion, alternate viewpoints and new experiences allowing them to create new possibilities. The end results are a better workplace, happier customers and increased ticket sales. As Kahn put it, attendees were

## WWA 2022 Hall of Fame Inductees

**Billy Hamilton**,  
Universal Orlando  
Resort

•  
**Patty Miller**,  
World Waterpark  
Association

•  
**David Sangree**,  
Hotel & Leisure Advisors

"drenched" with good ideas.

The second session on Friday featured **Punam Mathur** whose keynote address "Recover? Re-cover? [Wreck]-over? Where Do We Go From Here?" discussed how the industry has moved from pandemic to endemic. She asked the question: What did we learn that will make us better and stronger both professionally and personally?

The World Waterpark Association will host its 43rd Annual Symposium & Trade Show in New Orleans, Louisiana, from October 24-27, 2023.

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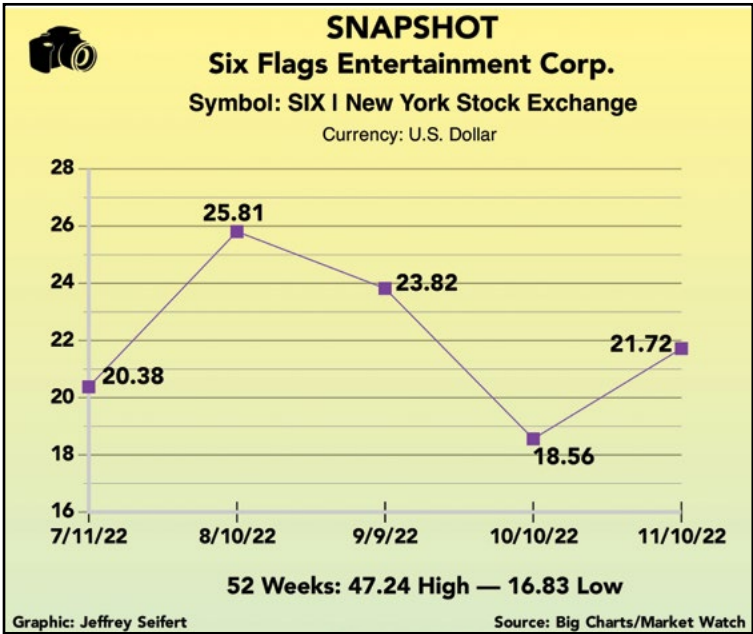
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MARKET WATCH

| COMPANY                          | SYMBOL  | MARKET | PRICE<br>11/10/22 | HIGH<br>52-Week | LOW<br>52-Week |
|----------------------------------|---------|--------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| The Blackstone Group             | BX      | NYSE   | 103.52            | 149.78          | 79.55          |
| Cedar Fair, L.P.                 | FUN     | NYSE   | 41.18             | 62.56           | 37.78          |
| Comcast Corp./NBCUniversal Media | CMCSA   | NASDAQ | 32.77             | 53.99           | 28.39          |
| The Walt Disney Company          | DIS     | NYSE   | 90.46             | 163.61          | 86.28          |
| EPR Properties                   | EPR     | NYSE   | 40.05             | 56.38           | 34.58          |
| Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.             | JP:9010 | TYO    | 4845.00           | 5110.00         | 3650.00        |
| Haichang Holdings Ltd.           | HK:2255 | SEHK   | 7.11              | 7.10            | 1.01           |
| Leofoo Development Co.           | TW:2705 | TSEC   | 16.30             | 19.95           | 15.40          |
| MGM Resorts International        | MGM     | NYSE   | 35.31             | 49.00           | 26.41          |
| Royal Caribbean Cruises, Ltd.    | RCL     | NYSE   | 57.72             | 90.55           | 31.09          |
| Sansei Technologies, Inc.        | JP:6357 | TYO    | 752.00            | 926.00          | 702.00         |
| SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.     | SEAS    | NYSE   | 55.91             | 76.57           | 40.01          |
| Six Flags Entertainment Co.      | SIX     | NYSE   | 21.73             | 47.24           | 16.83          |
| Tivoli A/S                       | DK:TIV  | CSE    | 800.00            | 900.00          | 650.00         |

STOCK PRICES ABOVE ARE GENERALLY QUOTED IN THE FOREIGN CURRENCY IN WHICH THE COMPANY IS LOCATED  
\*Dubai Parks and Resorts halted trading on the Dubai Financial Market due to an acquisition by Meraas Leisure and Entertainment LLC earlier this year.

Worldwide Markets: **ASX**, Australian Securities Exchange; **CSE**, Copenhagen Stock Exchange; **LSE**, London Stock Exchange; **NYSE**, New York Stock Exchange; **NASDAQ**, National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations; **SEHK**, Hong Kong Stock Exchange; **SZSE**, Shenzhen Stock Exchange; **TSEC**, Taiwan Stock Exchange, Corp.; **TYO/TSE**, Tokyo Stock Exchange  
—SOURCES: Bloomberg.com; Wall Street Journal



| DIESEL PRICES |               |                        |
|---------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Region (U.S)  | As of 11/7/22 | Change from 1 year ago |
| East Coast    | \$5.473       | \$1.603                |
| Midwest       | \$5.351       | \$1.718                |
| Gulf Coast    | \$4.937       | \$1.455                |
| Mountain      | \$5.338       | \$1.505                |
| West Coast    | \$5.393       | \$1.419                |
| California    | \$6.191       | \$1.490                |

| CURRENCY              |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| On 11/11/22 \$1 USD = |                         |
| 0.9925                | EURO                    |
| 0.8684                | GBP (British Pound)     |
| 144.35                | JPY (Japanese Yen)      |
| 0.9774                | CHF (Swiss Franc)       |
| 1.5411                | AUD (Australian Dollar) |
| 1.3458                | CAD (Canadian Dollar)   |

BUSINESS WATCH

Six Flags reports third quarter performance

ARLINGTON, Texas — **Six Flags Entertainment Corporation** reported third quarter 2022 financial results.

Total revenue for third quarter 2022 decreased \$133 million, or 21%, compared to third quarter 2021, driven by lower attendance partially offset by higher per capita spending. The lower attendance was driven by an increase in ticket prices and elimination of free tickets and heavily-discounted product offerings.

The \$8.94 increase in guest spending per capita compared to third quarter 2021 was driven by a \$6.23 increase in admissions spending per capita and a \$2.71 increase in in-park spending per capita. The increase in admissions spending per capita was primarily driven by higher realized ticket pricing and a higher mix of single day tickets. The higher in-park spending reflects the company's in-park pricing initiatives

"This was a year of transition for Six Flags, as we made bold changes to our business model in order to elevate the guest experience and to position the company for sustainable, long-term earnings growth," said **Selim Bassoul**, president and CEO. "While it will take time to achieve our ambitious goals, we are encouraged by our recent progress, with guest spending per capita up nearly 50 percent year-to-date relative to 2019, and with attendance trends and season pass sales significantly accelerating in October and early November."

SeaWorld announces third quarter results

ORLANDO — **SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.** reported its financial results for the third quarter and first nine months of fiscal year 2022.

Attendance was 7.3 million guests, an increase of 0.1 million guests or 1.5% from the third quarter of 2021. Compared to the third quarter of 2019, attendance decreased by 0.8 million guests or 9.7%. Excluding international guest visitation, group-related attendance, adverse weather impact (including Hurricane Ian), and calendar shift, attendance increased by approximately 2% when compared to the third quarter of 2019.

Total revenue was a record of \$565.2 million, an increase of \$44.0 million or 8.4% from the third quarter of 2021. Compared to the third quarter of 2019, total revenue increased by \$91.5 million or 19.3%.

"I am happy to report our sixth consecutive quarter of record financial results," said **Marc Swanson**, chief executive officer of SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc. "While we achieved records for revenue, net income and Adjusted EBITDA in the quarter, these results still do not reflect a normalized operating environment and we still have significant scope to improve our execution and our financial results.

Fourth quarter, year end for Walt Disney

BURBANK, Calif. — **The Walt Disney Company** reported earnings for its fourth quarter and fiscal year ended October 1, 2022. Revenues for the quarter and year grew 9% and 23%, respectively. Diluted earnings per share (EPS) from continuing operations for the quarter was comparable to the prior-year quarter at \$0.09. Excluding certain items diluted EPS for the quarter decreased to \$0.30 from \$0.37 in the prior-year quarter. Diluted EPS from continuing operations for the fiscal year ended October 1, 2022 increased to \$1.75 from \$1.11 in the prior year. Excluding certain items, diluted EPS for the year increased to \$3.53 from \$2.29 in the prior year.

"2022 was a strong year for Disney, with some of our best storytelling yet, record results at our Parks, Experiences and Products segment, and outstanding subscriber growth at our direct-to-consumer services, which added nearly 57 million subscriptions this year for a total of more than 235 million," said **Bob Chapek**, chief executive officer, The Walt Disney Company.

## ON THE MOVE

Walt Disney Co.'s board of directors replaced Chief Executive **Bob Chappek** with **Robert Iger**, the company's former chairman and CEO who left the company at the end of last year, according to a company announcement.



Iger

"The board has concluded that as Disney embarks on an increasingly complex period of industry transformation, Bob Iger is uniquely situated to lead the company through this pivotal period," said **Susan Arnold**, chairman of Disney's board, in a statement.

The Board of Directors of **Parks! America, Inc.** announced it has appointed **Lisa Brady**, an experienced leader in driving growth in the amusement and resort industry, as president and CEO, replacing **Dale Van Voorhis**, currently serving as interim CEO.



Brady

For the last decade, Brady has served in a variety of leadership roles of increasing responsibility with **Cedar Fair Entertainment Company** including investor relations, strategic planning, marketing and advertising activities, resort and adjacent development as well as implementation of key growth initiatives. Prior to joining Cedar Fair Entertainment, Brady was a sell-side analyst with **Key Banc Capital Markets** covering fitness, leisure, and hospitality companies. She has been a member of the Parks! America, Inc. board of directors since November 2021.

"I am excited to embark on my new leadership role with Parks! America and the opportunity to build upon the foundation and legacy Dale and the rest of the team have established," said Brady. "I look forward to working with Dale, the rest of the board of directors and the management team in leading the company in its next phases of growth."

**Merlin Entertainments** has announced the appointment of 25-year sports and entertainment industry veteran **Scott M. O'Neil** as chief executive officer, effective November 15, 2022. O'Neil will be responsible for overseeing the business operations and global growth for Merlin Entertainments across its 147 attractions in 24 countries. O'Neil's appointment comes following outgoing CEO **Nick Varney's** decision to retire after 23 years.



O'Neil

"Scott has significant experience in the entertainment industry, a proven track-record of delivering business transformation, and the vision and ambition to lead

Merlin through the next exciting stages of its global development," stated **Roland Hernandex**, chair of Merlin Entertainments. "The board has every confidence in him, and we look forward to working closely together over the coming years."

O'Neil was most recently CEO for **Harris Blitzer Sports & Entertainment**, a portfolio of sports, entertainment and investment properties, where he oversaw more than \$2bn growth in enterprise value, from \$415m to \$2.5bn, through his focus on talent, culture and guest experience.

Shortly before IAAPA Expo 2022, **Susan Storey** announced the formation of her own public relations firm, **Storey to Story Communications**.

"Public Relations people are notoriously bad at sharing PR about ourselves — we'd rather share our clients' successes over our own," commented Storey. "But, if we don't share, no one really knows what we are doing."

Storey serves as a monthly contributor to *Park World*. Previously, she was director of global communications for the **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA)**. She has also served as director of communications for **SeaWorld Orlando**, **Great Wolf Lodge** and **Give Kids The World Village**.



Storey

**Scruffy Dog Creative Group** has announced two new senior appointments to its design and creative build division.

**Paul Williams** will be joining Scruffy Dog Creative Group as senior creative director at its London design studio. Williams has over 29 years' experience creatively driving the development of successful visitor attractions for the likes of **DreamWorks**, **Marvel**, **Disney** and **Merlin Entertainments**.



Williams

"I have always admired the incredible creativity and high standards of production that Scruffy Dog Creative Group consistently delivers within the global visitor attractions industry," said Williams.

**Malik Al Asadi** joins the creative build division as senior project manager. Al Asadi an accomplished, project manager brings more than 15 years of experience directing large scale themed environments. He previously held employment at **Universal Creative Japan**, **DXB Entertainments** and **CSM Live**.



Al Asadi

"I see this new role as a fantastic opportunity to contribute to an exciting, forward-thinking, and fast-moving company," said Al Asadi.

## OBITUARY

## Pioneer Alberto Zamperla passes away suddenly at 71

VICENZA, Italy — The second-generation President of global amusement manufacturer Zamperla Group — and fourth-generation member of a family dedicated to amusement traditions — Alberto Zamperla died suddenly on Thursday, November 17, 2022.



Alberto Zamperla

A visionary and innovator, Alberto Zamperla revolutionized the amusement industry while bringing fun to billions of people of all ages worldwide, thanks to his endless creativity. He is survived by his wife Paola, his sons Antonio, Alessandro and Adriano, and his three grandchildren.

In 1976, Zamperla left Italy for the United States to further pursue his dreams of innovating and creating rides and attractions, following in his father's footsteps. His craftsmanship, determination, intelligence and skills created hundreds of rides that transformed the amusement industry for generations to come.

His extraordinary drive and admiration for the industry led to much success, whereas in the late eighties, he signed a contract to build the majority of Disneyland Paris attractions, followed by Universal, Paramount and Six Flags, bringing his innovations global. In 2010, Zamperla relaunched the most iconic amusement park, Luna Park in Coney Island, where for over a decade, he and his family have transformed the famous amusement area into a seaside destination for travelers from across the globe. As a result of his accomplishments and success, in 2019, he was welcomed into the IAAPA Hall of Fame, alongside his father Antonio Zamperla, and industry giants including Walt Disney and George Ferris, the inventor of the Ferris wheel.

His passion for creating and innovating will live on through his family, colleagues and employees around the world.

*NOTE: This story is breaking as Amusement Today goes to press. We plan to have more details — as well as an industry tribute to Antonio Zamperla — in our January 2023 issue.*

## Dreamer behind Flambards theme park dies at age 62

MULLION, U.K. — The man who brought the thrill of a theme park to Cornwall has died unexpectedly at the age of 62. On Tuesday, October 25, 2022, James Kingsford-Hale passed away suddenly and unexpectedly at his home in Mullion, U.K.



Kingsford-Hale

Kingsford-Hale is credited for turning Flambards Theme Park in Helston, U.K., into what it is today, transforming it from the Cornwall Aero Park started by his parents Douglas and Audrey into a fully-fledged theme park.

He was a dedicated charity supporter, having raised many thousands of dollars for a number of charities over the years with various fundraising efforts through both Flambards and sporting lunches.

"He was a big personality and he was a gentleman," stated Kingsford-Hale's daughter Susie. "He was a kind man with a wicked sense of humor, he will leave a void in all of our hearts."

James Kingsford-Hale is survived by his wife Kath, brother Mark, children Susie, George, Luke and Matt, and grandchildren Theo and Hattie.

# Women INFLUENCE

## A view from the top...

**Jennifer Giesike** has been at the helm of the **Washington Town and County Fair**, Washington, Missouri, for 22 years. This fair serves as the fund-raising arm for the city's Chamber of Commerce. It is held annually in August.

When Giesike first came on board in 2000, her duties were to the fair. In 2012, she became the Chamber's CEO and president. A restructuring and streamlining of staff positions at the same time had her take the supervisory fair duties with her as the Chamber head.

## Jennifer Giesike's passion for the fair industry runs deep

WASHINGTON, Mo. — Being a part of the fair industry is not just a job for Jennifer Giesike.

It is and has been her passion, and there is no doubt, it also is in her blood.

Giesike has been at the helm of the Washington Town and Country Fair, in Washington, Missouri, for 22 years.

She grew up on a farm not far away from the fair gates. She began showing animals, primarily market pigs from her parents' farm, at the age of eight years. She showed through the 4-H club until she aged out. Her two younger sisters did the same.

Her father volunteered for the fair when she grew up. Her parents, David and Kathy Brockman, raised their family on a farm that had been passed down. In fact, the family has two farms in the area. One was passed to her father from his parents and the other to her mother from her parents.

Giesike's daughter, Hallie, has been showing pigs and steers since she was young. She, too, is about to age out of the program.

Giesike's husband, Chad, volunteers at the Washington Town and County Fair, helping with the motor sports events.

Except for the four years of college, Giesike has never been far away. She attended East Central College in Union, Missouri, for two years. She played volleyball there before she transferred to Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, where she graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture.

Yes. There is no doubt the

fair industry is deeply rooted in Giesike's life.

But this hometown woman's love for the industry hasn't stopped inside her city's boundaries. It has just been a catalyst for her to broaden her knowledge of the industry and become more entrenched on a national and international level.

Since becoming head of the Washington Town and Country Fair in 2000, she immediately began stepping up in volunteer roles with the IAFE.

She received her IAFE Certified Fair Executive (CFE) certification in April 2008. She graduated in the debut class of the Institute of Fair Management in December 2009.

She has served as the IAFE Zone 5 director and as the co-chair of the Young Professionals Initiative (YPI). She was awarded the first IAFE Young Professional Rising Star Award in December 2009.

Giesike also has chaired the 2019 IAFE Annual Convention Program Committee, the CFE Committee, the Membership Committee and the County Fair Committee.

In 2020, she completed the IAFE Institute of Fair Management Leadership Graduate Track requirements.

And it was during that year, 2020, she found out about her nomination to chair the IAFE in 2023.

"I'll never forget," she said. "It was the 5th of May 2020. COVID had shut down everything, and my staff was working from home. We had been having Zoom meetings, but I missed them, seeing them. My staff is so fantastic. I decided that I would buy a hanging plant

**Jennifer Giesike**  
CEO/President/Fair Manager  
Washington Area Chamber of Commerce  
Washington, Missouri



for each one of them. I was going to drive around and put it on their porches and step away so we could talk a moment at a distance."

Her first stop was at the Chamber of Commerce office. She had one staff person there to access the computers.

"As I pulled up to the office, I got a phone call from Jessica Underberg of the Erie County Fair (Hamburg, New York)," Giesike said. "She said, 'How would you like to be the IAFE chair in 2023?' I was in shock. I couldn't understand why me, my fair is small in comparison to so many others."

Nevertheless, the shock wore off and the excitement set in. She was able to relay the news in person, plant in hand, to every person on her staff that day.

"They were all so happy and have been so supportive," she said.

In thinking about 2023 and her role as the IAFE chair, she sees several important issues. One is the continued rising costs of named entertainment, another

is the difficulty fairs are having in finding volunteers.

"We need to find a way to get more volunteers and what to do with them when we do get them," she said.

Safety and security remain a focus.

Not long ago, Giesike was asked about her favorite parts of her job and being a part of the fair industry. This is just part of the answer she gave.

"I love producing an event that allows families to attend and make memories. I love being able to showcase our youth in the community that show livestock and home economics exhibits. I love seeing the economic impact that the fair has on our community. I love seeing the volunteer spirit that our community has and being able to help all our volunteer organizations.

"I love what I do because I know what we do is good and that makes me happy."

—Pam Sherborne



# SAFETY, MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

► 10 reasons to attend AIMS Safety Seminar — page 41 / Pa. Amusement Ride Safety Seminar — page 42 /

## As January approaches, industry safety seminars are set to kick off

AT: Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

UNITED STATES — Industry safety seminars to raise the level of safety awareness will begin kicking off in January, and there is literally something for every aspect of the industry, whether it be in operations, maintenance, management or human resources.

Attendees can earn certifications and, in many cases, Continuing Education Units (CEUs) when participating.

The following is a sampling of what is coming up.

### AIMS International

With a brand-new track and the second year of a 2022 new program, plans are well underway for the **2023 AIMS International Safety Seminar**, which will be held for one more year at the **Galveston Island Convention Center**, Galveston, Texas, Jan. 8-13.

According to AIMS Executive Director **Mary Jane Brewer**, it is shaping up to be the best safety seminar ever, with many core ride maintenance, inspection and safety courses returning and some brand new ones being introduced. She said there will be over 200 different course offerings featuring more than 300 content hours.

The new track, **Adventure Attractions**, was created to



The AIMS International Safety Seminar has been set for January 8-13, 2023, at the Galveston Island Convention Center in Galveston, Texas. COURTESY AIMS INTERNATIONAL

address safety concerns of amusement attractions that fall outside the traditional theme park, carnival and water park. These attractions include mountain coasters, trampoline courts, inflatables, parasailing, aerial adventure courses, zip lines, eco tours, tethered helium balloons and others that are not covered in the traditional amusement industry safety education curriculum.

"We are really excited about this new track," Brewer said.

AIMS offers certification levels in maintenance, operations, inspector and aquatics. Attendees build their own schedule, choosing to best suit their needs and desired outcome.

Following up on last year, **Ellis and**

**Associates**, will present the aquatics curriculum and **International Ride Training** will present the ride operations training. AIMS also works with the **Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA)** to help with the carnival track.

The keynote address in 2023 will be presented by 30-year industry veteran **Erik Beard**. Beard is the managing member and general counsel of International Ride Training. He began his career in the ride operations department at **Cedar Fair Entertainment's Cedar Point** and **Worlds of Fun** in 1992, where he spent six years as manager of ride operations and park services. Beard also worked on the pre-opening operations team at **Universal's Islands**

**of Adventure** where he had direct responsibility for the development of operating procedures for the **Lost Continent** and **Jurassic Park** islands and guided numerous attractions through construction, commissioning and pre-

opening training and testing.  
• [aimsintl.org](http://aimsintl.org)

### NAARSO

This nonprofit organization is presenting its **36th Annual Safety Seminar** set to be held at the **Hilton Myrtle Beach Resort**, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, Jan. 29-Feb. 3, 2023.

NAARSO, dedicated to industry safety, administers three industry certifications, the **Inspector Certification**, **Operations Certification** and **Aquatic Certification**. There are specific levels that can be achieved in each category.

Additional training offered on select days during the seminar includes **Train the Trainer**, hands-on training and other special education al opportunities.

During the 2023 seminar, attendees can expect course instruction

► See SEMINARS, page 38



This year's International Ride Operator Certification "Ride School" is themed to Super Heroes. COURTESY IRT

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All five days of the Northwest Showmen's Club Annual Safety Seminar — set for February 20-24, 2023 — will be held at Funtastic Shows campus in Portland, Oregon. COURTESY NORTHWEST SHOWMEN'S CLUB



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## ►SEMINARS

**Continued from page 37**

Friday-Sunday, an opening reception on Sunday evening and a closing dinner on Friday evening.

•naarso.com

### Northwest Showmen's Club

The Northwest Showmen's Club (NWSC) is presenting its **42nd Annual Safety Seminar**, to be held on the campus of **Funtastic Shows**, Portland, Oregon, Feb. 20-24, 2023.

This showmen's club has a long history being established over 42 years ago to promote continuing education by amusement industry professionals and to raise the level of safety within the industry.

The NWSC Safety Seminar is aligned with **Portland Community College** for accreditation in their Continuing Education Program providing two CEUs for participation and completion of the seminar.

The seminar also offers NAARSO and/or AIMS testing on the last day.

•nwshowmensclub.com

### International Ride Training

This company offers a

variety of services including being a full-service provider of training and standard operating procedure development and operational consulting for owners/operators of amusement rides and water slides.

It also presents the **International Ride Operator Certification (iROC)** training program entitled **Ride Camp Safety School**. The 2023 program is set to take place Feb. 5-9 at **Carowinds** located in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Ride Camp is defined as a "train the trainer" program. There are CEU-awarded credits for instructor, trainer and operator levels.

**Cindee Huddy**, one of IRT partners, said the theme for the 2023 Ride Camp Safety School is about superheroes "because we know that ride operator's super power is safety and service."

"We are excited because this year we are offering tracks for Level One for first-time attendees, Level Two for middle operations management and Level Three for the leadership attendees," Huddy said.

"There is an action-packed week planned for the International Ride Operator

► See SEMINARS, page 40



NAARSO's Annual Safety Seminar is set for the Hilton Myrtle Beach Resort, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, January 29 through February 3, 2023. The seminar offers a hands-on Qualified Welder class. COURTESY NAARSO

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## SEMINARS

Continued from page 38

Certification, which includes client-only sessions," she said. "In addition, we have educational sessions that are open to those not receiving the iROC certification. We hope all those in operational leadership will join us to enhance their superpowers."

Some educational sessions in 2023 include ADA 101 for operators, assertiveness skills and practice for leaders, guest service enhancements at the ride, efficiency improvements, train the trainer tips and techniques, aquatic operator procedure practice and many more.

"We serve any business with rides and/or attractions," she said. "We are gearing up for record attendance with over 45 parks in 2023."

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### Pennsylvania Amusement Ride Safety Seminar

This seminar series is designed to offer specialized presentations covering various amusement rides and is approved by Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Bureau of Ride and Measurement Standards.

In addition, the Pennsylvania inspector licenses and Pennsylvania-approved training are recognized by the New Jersey Department of Consumer Affairs for the New Jersey Recognized Certified Maintenance Technician (RCMT) program.

The spring seminar has been scheduled to run at the Red Lion Hotel and Conference Center in Harrisburg — Hershey, Pennsylvania, February 28 through March 2.

Presentations will be made for inspector licenses in Inflatables, Haunted Attractions, Go Karts, Water Slides and Extreme Sports for independent and/or insurance inspectors. There are two levels.

This event is coordinated by Phil Slaggert.

•paridesafety.com

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## NEWS & NOTES

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### 10 Great Reasons to Attend the 2023 AIMS International Safety Seminar

1. Safety is the number one priority in the amusement industry and the **AIMS International** Safety Seminar is consistently rated the best and most comprehensive amusement industry safety seminar worldwide.

2. Variety and diversity — No other seminar offers such a diverse range of classes. At the AIMS International Safety Seminar, you can choose classes that fit your needs, or if you prefer, there are a variety of specialized tracks to choose from — Maintenance 1 & 2, Inspection 1 & 2, Operations, Aquatics, Safety and, NEW this year, an expanded in-person and livestreamed Spanish Language track with courses covering maintenance, operations and inspection topics.

3. New education tracks — An all-new Adventure Attractions Track, which was specifically designed for the fastest growing segment of the amusement industry, will offer a hands-on experience at a nearby

indoor entertainment center where students will learn from experts in aerial adventure courses, trampolines, rock climbing walls, go karts and more! The highly-acclaimed Academy of Amusement Risk Management, Safety and Security (AARMSS) is back with a new curriculum for a second year with a focus on Safety, Security Emergency Management and Risk Management.

4. Highly qualified education partners — **Ellis & Associates** (E&A), the worldwide leader in aquatics risk management and safety training, will be delivering new and updated courses in the Aquatics Track for a third year in a row. The upgraded Operations Track, with courses curated and delivered by the ride operations experts at International Ride Training (IRT), boasts fresh new content and hands-on experience at a local amusement park.

5. Networking opportunities — Attracting more than 450 students from across the industry — theme

and amusement parks, water parks, carnivals, zoos, FECs and more — you will learn from your peers and make connections you can use for years to come. From ride inspectors, maintenance, operations and aquatics technicians to senior management and industry suppliers, there are sessions for everyone.

6. Learn from more than 100 world class instructors — all high-profile industry experts in their fields. Through in-person networking and face-to-face instruction, students can ask questions, share ideas and gain more great connections.

7. It's affordable! — Tuition is just \$695 (for a limited time), with no requirement to be an AIMS International member. AND, lunches, snacks, evening receptions, as well as your CEU certificate are included in the price!

8. Apply for Scholarships! — **IAAPA** provides five scholarships to the AIMS Safety Seminar in memory

of **Alan Ramsay**, and there are two additional scholarships offered in the memory of Jake Kaminsky. Application forms can be found at [aimsintl.org/aims-international-safety-seminar/scholarships](http://aimsintl.org/aims-international-safety-seminar/scholarships). **OABA** offers four scholarships to OABA members who are first-time AIMS International attendees.

9. Certification — opportunities to sit for any of the prestigious AIMS International certification exams will be available in-person during the seminar, with review sessions available for those who feel the need for a little extra preparation. Exams are available in Spanish at the seminar and Virtual Spanish Track attendees will be able to take certification exams online.

10. Connect with amusement industry manufacturers and suppliers — chat with exhibitors one-on-one between classes and attend industry supplier/manufacture courses and discover the latest trends in ride technology and innovation.

Space for this AIMS page is provided courtesy of Amusement Today as a corporate partner of AIMS Intl. Content is provided by AT & AIMS.



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# Over 200 attend fall Pennsylvania Amusement Ride Safety Seminar

AT: B. Derek Shaw  
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Offered semi-annually each spring and fall, the Pennsylvania Ride Safety Seminar trains and tests hundreds of amusement ride operators throughout Pennsylvania and other states. During November 8-10, 200 students and 57 instructors from various amusement operations received ride safety training and testing conducted by third-party operator **Slaggett Risk Management** for the **Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture**, Bureau of Ride and Measurements Standards. Participants and instructors came primarily from Pennsylvania, however there were also attendees from California, Colorado, Florida, New Jersey, Ohio and Tennessee.

The fall program offered a total of 110 unique topics

comprising 162 class hours. Attendees selected the specialty courses they felt were beneficial for their abilities, career path, job description and employer benefit. Some of the topics included inflatables, proper anchoring, staking and securement, emergency planning, rigging safety, log out/tag out, hydraulics, out-of-production rides, threat analysis, mechanical bulls and surf simulators, pneumatics, adventure challenge attractions and more. Weather's Impact on Outdoor Events was Tuesday morning's opening session.

There were five new topics for this 34th session. Two were expanded from facility management and emergency preparedness topics with classes on emergency action plans and situational awareness. In addition, the other three were in the entertainment area on sales and strategy, business



Earl George, intelligence analyst, Pennsylvania Criminal Intelligence Center, a bureau of the Pennsylvania State Police, conducted the Active Shooter session. It was one of the 110 unique topics from which attendees could select. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

development and employee training and retention.

The keynote address was made Wednesday morning by **Walt Remmert**, director, Bureau of Ride & Measurement Standards.

"I reminded participants that they are the reason that

Pennsylvania's program is successful," said Remmert. "Their time, dedication, diligence and experience create an environment that promotes safety. My quote for this seminar: 'Take time to step out of our three-foot world (those issues that

are immediately important to us and occupy much of our thought process day to day) and look at the bigger picture,' specifically as it relates to safety. Try and be involved, make things

► See PENNSYLVANIA, page 44

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At left are some of the staff of the Amusement Ride Safety Division. From left: Leonard Adams III; Walt Remmert, director, Bureau of Ride & Measurement Standards; Randall Arndt and Tony Catalano. Adams, Arndt and Catalano are all amusement ride quality assurance inspectors. Visible on the laptop is Joe Filoramo, supervisor, Amusement Ride Safety Division. AT/B. DEREK SHAW

## ►PENNSYLVANIA Continued from page 42

better (or at least don't make things worse). Put down the cell phones and recording devices and work with the people trying to diffuse an incident, comply and help others too (within your ability). Work towards the greater good whenever you can," he added.

The instructors and staff

are all volunteers with a wide spectrum of specialties that impact the amusement industry, from all across the country. **Phil Slaggert**, coordinator of the ride safety seminar spoke highly of the trainers: "We're very proud of our instructor core. We look for instructors who are towards the top of their field, in whatever specialty it is."

Testing was provided for Class 1 and 2 ride inspectors, general qualified inspectors and specialized inspectors. The Pennsylvania certification is recognized in many states across the country, including Recognized Certified Maintenance Technician, the program in place in New Jersey.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture has inspected and registered amusement rides under the Amusement Ride Safety Act since 1984 and regularly participates in education and outreach seminars that include classes and hands-on demonstrations. The next Pennsylvania Ride Safety Seminar is scheduled for February 28 to March 2 at the Red Lion Hotel and Conference Center, Harrisburg, just off I-283 on Lindle Road. That event will have additional courses in water attractions, go-karts and bumper boats.

•[paridesafety.com](http://paridesafety.com)

NOTE: The Pennsylvania Ride Safety Seminars are not to be confused with the annual PACE (Parks and Carnival Education) seminar, jointly sponsored by the Pennsylvania State Showmen's Association (PSSA) and the Pennsylvania Amusement Park & Attractions Association (PAPA). That seminar, presented by National Association of Amusement Ride Safety Officials (NAARSO), is scheduled for late October 2023. Dates, classroom and hands-on locations to be determined. PACE offers inspector training for Pennsylvania certified inspectors and/or NAARSO levels.

•[paceseminar.com](http://paceseminar.com)

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- Chance Double Decker Carousel.....\$299,000
- Huss Pirate Ship (T/M).....\$399,000
- ABC Portable Log Flume.....\$699,000
- S&S Frog Hopper.....\$29,000
- Visa Floor Pickup Mini Scooter (6 cars).....\$49,000

Call Len or Earl

(908) 526-8009 • FAX: (908) 526-4535

[www.Rides4U.com](http://www.Rides4U.com)

## FOR SALE

Small family amusement park, currently operating, for sale in Swanzey, N.H. provides excellent location with scenic views of rolling hills and neighboring municipal airport. Park features go-karts, mini golf, restaurant and amusement rides. Rides include: Ferris Wheel; Tilt-A-Whirl; Merry Go Round; Scrambler; Kid's Car Ride; Kiddie Coaster; Tubs Of Fun and Train. Park buildings include go-karts; restaurant; mini golf/ticketing, restrooms and maintenance. Parking area is primary gravel.



For more information contact:  
Richard D'Aprile at (727) 421-3569 (cell)  
or visit [RunwayFunPark.com](http://RunwayFunPark.com)

## FOR SALE

### Chance Rides CP Huntington train (used)

- 24" Gauge
- Gasoline Engine
- 1965 Model
- 3 Coaches



**(704) 654-8355 • email: [steve@trainworksglobal.com](mailto:steve@trainworksglobal.com)**

## OPPORTUNITY



Morgan's Wonderland is in search for a CEO. This position is responsible for developing and executing a strategic and operational vision for the parks, resulting in a safe, exceptional, and guest-centric experience for all. The successful candidate will possess strong leadership, management, and interpersonal skills and a passionate desire to help those who have a disability or special need.

**Candidates should submit their resume to:**

**[morganswonderland.com/about-us/employment/](http://morganswonderland.com/about-us/employment/)**

## OPPORTUNITY

### ATTORNEYS NEEDED

*Amusement industry law practice The Sheehan Firm's dedication to client support has led to opening an office in Orlando, Florida, The practice is in search of two additional attorneys for the new office.*

**Attorneys interested in joining  
The Sheehan Firm  
should submit their resume to  
Thomas Sheehan at [tom@ridelaw.com](mailto:tom@ridelaw.com)**



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# Integrated Rides

What is "Integrated Rides"?

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**Antonio Zamperla SpA**  
Vicenza - Italy | ph +39 0444 998 400  
zamperla@zamperla.it

Zamperla's world-famous collection of flat rides is woven with a Zamperla coaster to maximize the capacity: this is the concept of Integrated Rides.

Placing a flat ride within a coaster footprint provides opportunities for increased ROI and dwell time in an area that would have otherwise been vacant. The result is an immersive environment that creates shareable moments between riders at different attractions.

Discover more on [zamperla.com](https://www.zamperla.com) and follow us on [f](#) [i](#) [t](#) [in](#) @zamperlarides